MARVEL
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A SCOTT ADAMS/MARVEL COMICS LIMITED SERIES
QUESTPROBE
FEATURING
SPIDER-MAN
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2
JAN
IS THIS ONE OF MYSTERIO'S ILLUSIONS--
DAILY BUGLE
--OR AM I SEEING TWO OF HIM?

Stan Lee PRESENTS:

QUESTPROBE!

Original concept by SCOTT ADAMS & JOHN BYRNE

FEATURING: THE AMAZING SPIDER-MAN IN:

MYSTERIO TIMES TWO!

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IT'S A SULTRY LATE SUMMER'S EVENING LIKE MANY OTHERS IN NEW YORK CITY... THE AIR IS HOT AND DANK, POLLUTION HANGS OVER THE STREETS LIKE A SHROUD, AND THE SPECTACULAR SPIDER-MAN HAS GOT MORE THAN HIS SHARE OF PROBLEMS!

I THOUGHT TAKING A BRISK SWING AROUND TOWN WOULD HELP ME COOL DOWN, BUT IT'S JUST AS HOT UP HERE AS IT IS ON THE GROUND!

ISN'T THERE SOME SORT OF RULE THAT GLAMOROUS SUPER-TYPES LIKE ME OUGHT TO BE ABLE TO AFFORD AN AIR CONDITIONER?

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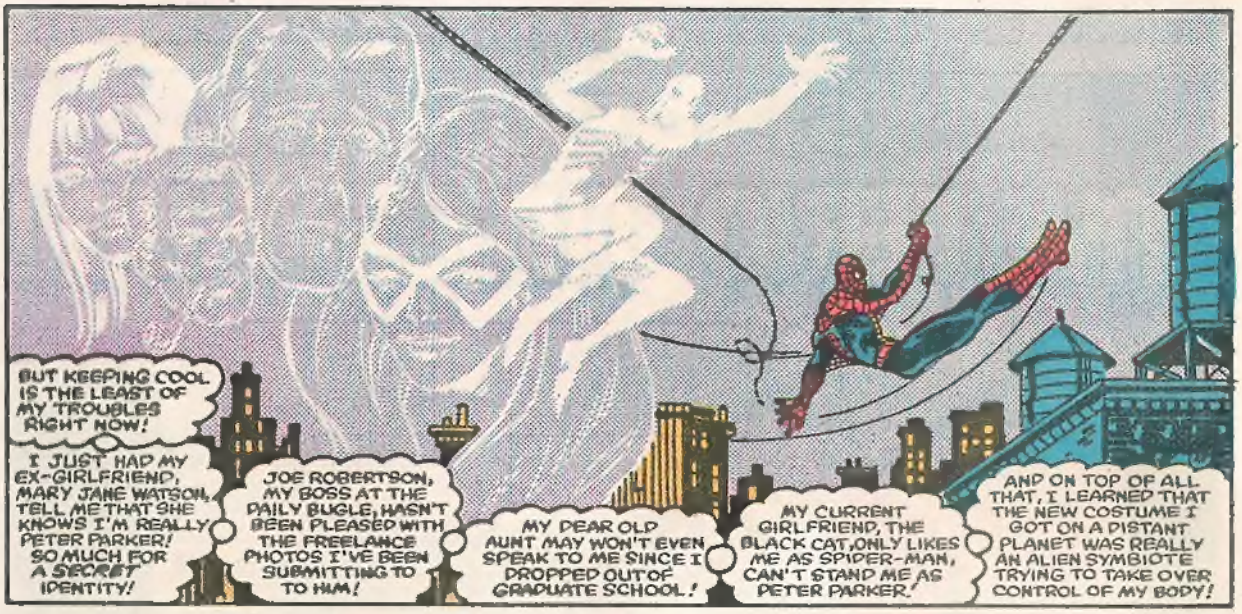
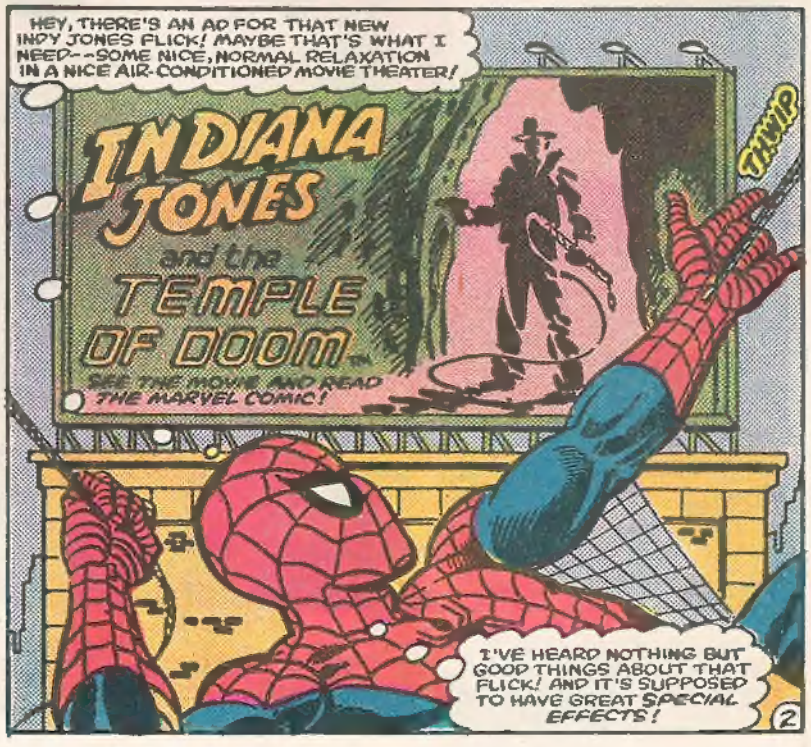
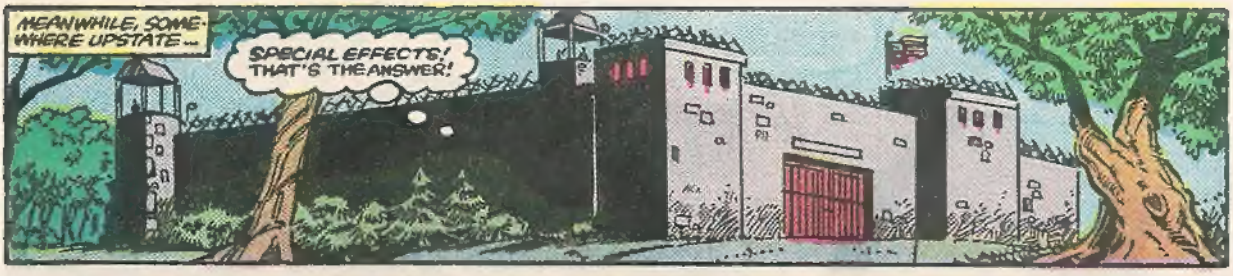

BUT KEEPING COOL IS THE LEAST OF MY TROUBLES RIGHT NOW!
I JUST HAD MY EX-GIRLFRIEND, MARY JANE WATSON, TELL ME THAT SHE KNOWS I'M REALLY PETER PARKER! SO MUCH FOR A SECRET IDENTITY!
JOE ROBERTSON, MY BOSS AT THE DAILY BUGLE, HASN'T BEEN PLEASED WITH THE FREELANCE PHOTOS I'VE BEEN SUBMITTING TO TO HIM!
MY DEAR OLD AUNT MAY WON'T EVEN SPEAK TO ME SINCE I DROPPED OUT OF GRADUATE SCHOOL!
MY CURRENT GIRLFRIEND, THE BLACK CAT, ONLY LIKES ME AS SPIDER-MAN, CAN'T STAND ME AS PETER PARKER!
AND ON TOP OF ALL THAT, I LEARNED THAT THE NEW COSTUME I GOT ON A DISTANT PLANET WAS REALLY AN ALIEN SYMBIOTE TRYING TO TAKE OVER CONTROL OF MY BODY!

WELL, AT LEAST I ENDED THAT THREAT BY DITCHING THOSE OTHER-WORLDLY THREADS! NO ONE'S LIABLE TO MISS THEM.
HEY! LOOK! IT'S SPIDER-MAN!
HEY! MY ADORING PUBLIC...
HI, KIDS!

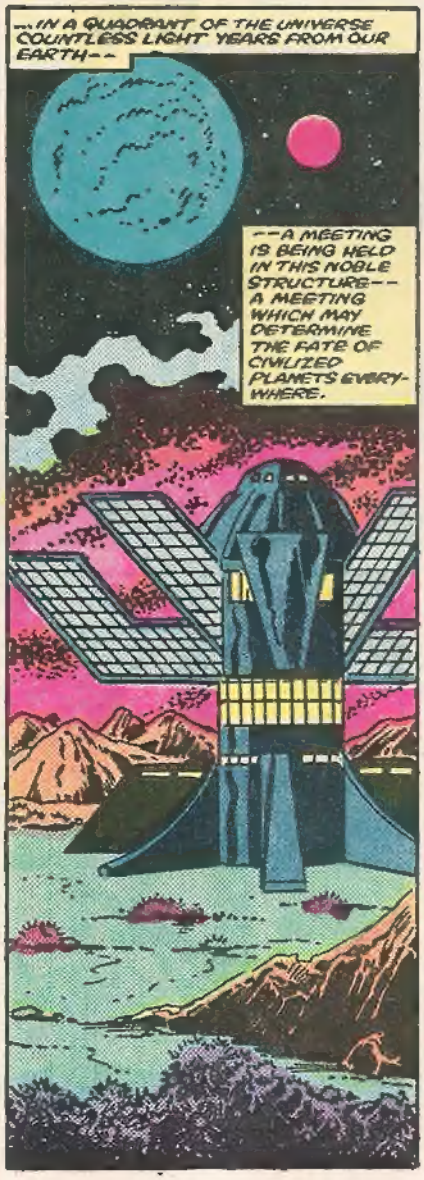
HEY, MAN, WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR BLACK COSTUME? IT WAS A SWAP!
YEAH, THIS OLD ONE IS A DRAG! Y'OUGHTTA BURN IT!
C'MON, EDDIE, YOU GONNA HOLD ONTO THAT SPALDEEN ALL NIGHT?
SHEESH! EVERYBODY'S A CRITIC!

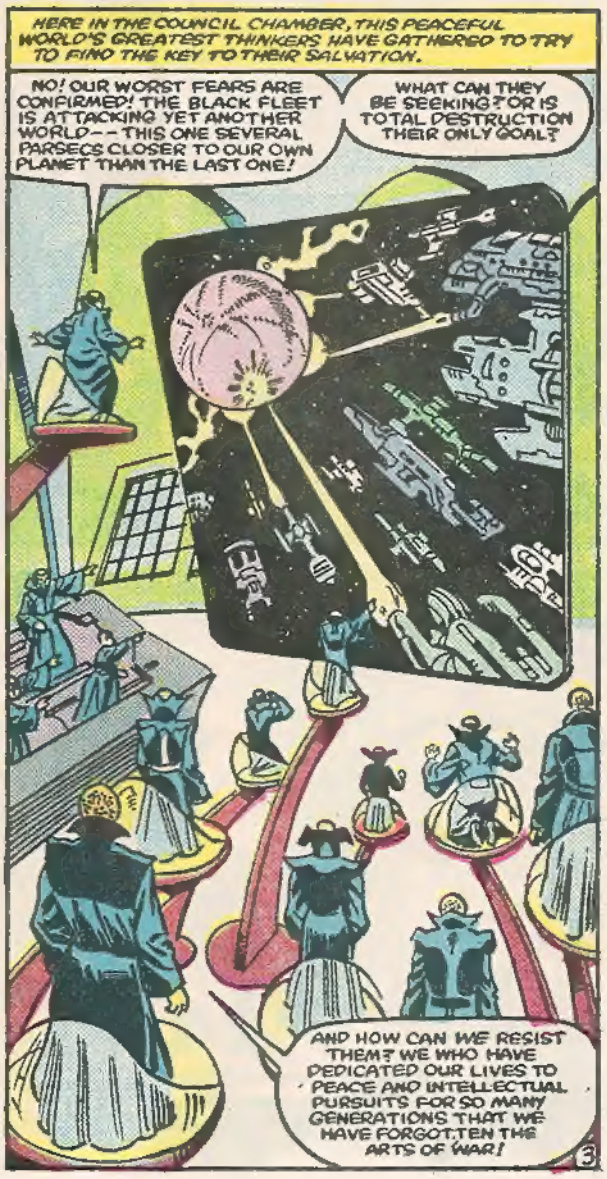

HEY, THERE'S AN AD FOR THAT NEW INDY JONES FLICK! MAYBE THAT'S WHAT I NEED--SOME NICE, NORMAL RELAXATION IN A NICE AIR-CONDITIONED MOVIE THEATER!
INDIANA JONES and the TEMPLE OF DOOM™
SEE THE MOVIE AND READ THE MARVEL COMIC!
THWIP
I'VE HEARD NOTHING BUT GOOD THINGS ABOUT THAT FLICK! AND IT'S SUPPOSED TO HAVE GREAT SPECIAL EFFECTS!
2


MEANWHILE, SOMEWHERE UPSTATE...
SPECIAL EFFECTS! THAT'S THE ANSWER!

VERY SOON NOW I'LL MAKE USE OF MY SKILLS AT CREATING SPECIAL EFFECTS AND ESCAPE FROM THIS ACCURSED PRISON!
THEN SPIDER-MAN WILL PAY FOR HAVING PUT ME HERE--
--PAY WITH HIS VERY LIFE!

WHILE STILL FURTHER AWAY...


...IN A QUADRANT OF THE UNIVERSE COUNTLESS LIGHT YEARS FROM OUR EARTH--
--A MEETING IS BEING HELD IN THIS NOBLE STRUCTURE-- A MEETING WHICH MAY DETERMINE THE FATE OF CIVILIZED PLANETS EVERYWHERE.


HERE IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, THIS PEACEFUL WORLD'S GREATEST THINKERS HAVE GATHERED TO TRY TO FIND THE KEY TO THEIR SALVATION.
NO! OUR WORST FEARS ARE CONFIRMED! THE BLACK FLEET IS ATTACKING YET ANOTHER WORLD-- THIS ONE SEVERAL PARSECS CLOSER TO OUR OWN PLANET THAN THE LAST ONE!
WHAT CAN THEY BE SEEKING? OR IS TOTAL DESTRUCTION THEIR ONLY GOAL?
AND HOW CAN WE RESIST THEM? WE WHO HAVE DEDICATED OUR LIVES TO PEACE AND INTELLECTUAL PURSUITS FOR SO MANY GENERATIONS THAT WE HAVE FORGOTTEN THE ARTS OF WAR!
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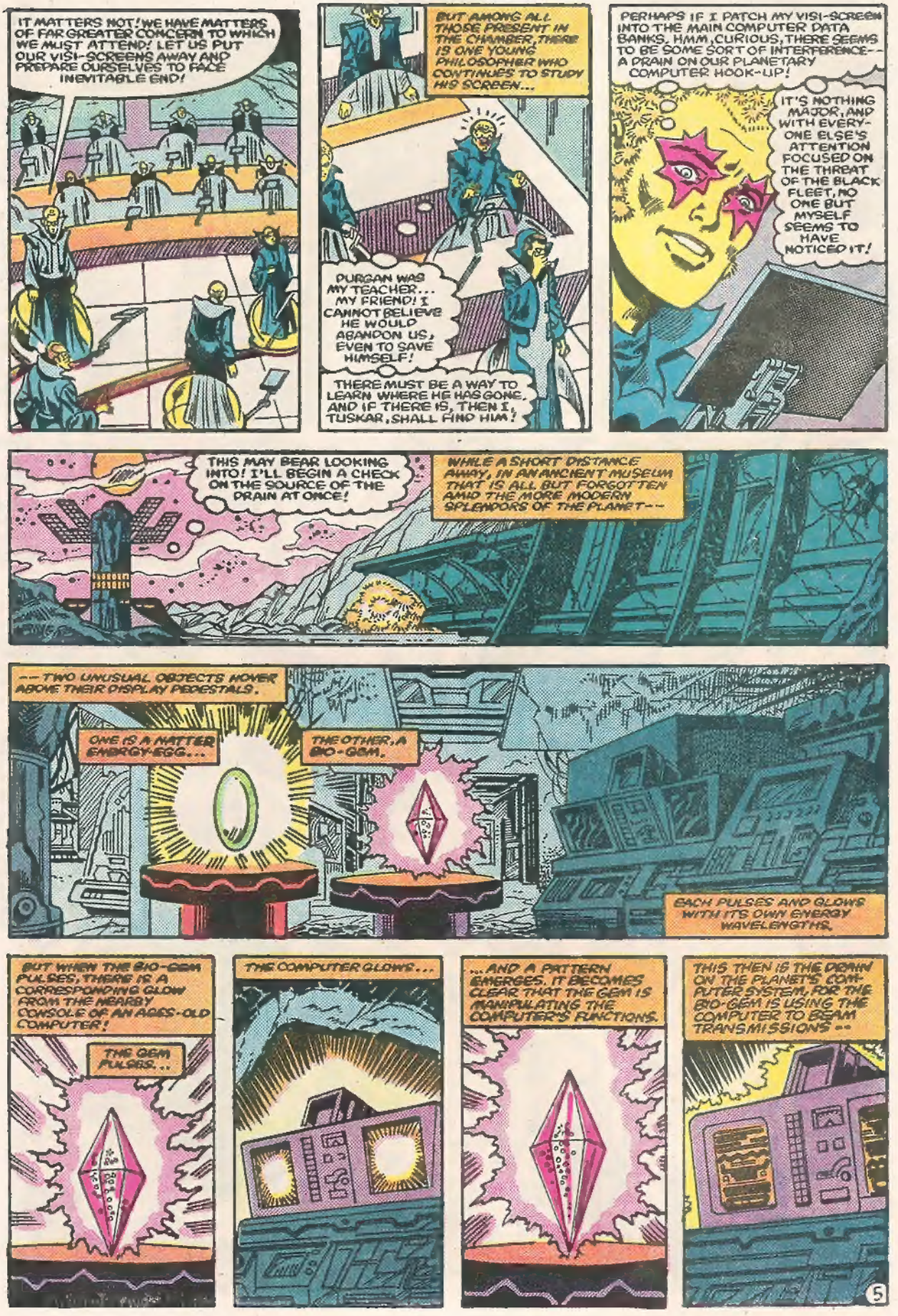
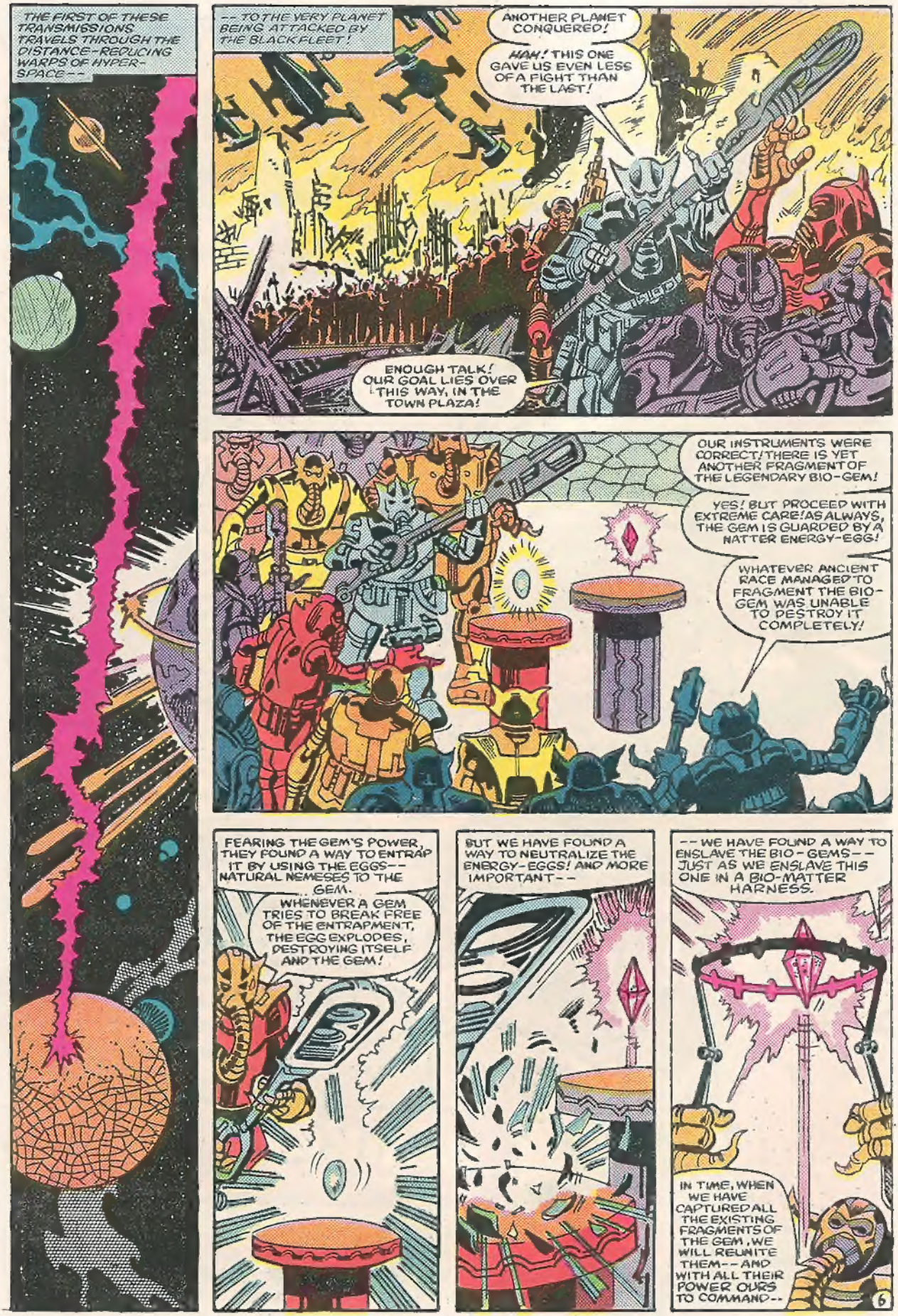
NO MATTER WHAT THE CONSEQUENCES, WE MUST NOT RELEARN THE BARBARIC WAYS OF BATTLE. BETTER THAT WE SHOULD DIE THAN SUFFER SUCH HERESY!
OF COURSE YOU ARE RIGHT, AGED OBISPO!
AYE! ONLY ONE AMONG US DARED SUGGEST THAT RESISTANCE WAS THE NOBLER COURSE -- THE PHILOSOPHER, DURGAN!
INDEED, OUR MONITORS CAPTURED HIS VERY WORDS AND ACTIONS. PAY HEED TO YOUR VISI-SCREENS, AND LEARN HOW LOW A MAN MAY SINK!
NO! CALL ME HERETIC IF YOU WILL, BUT I SAY TO YOU--
--THAT THOUGH OUR HISTORY AND OUR MORALITY MILITATES AGAINST OUR FIGHTING BACK, IT IS A GREATER SIN TO DIE WITHOUT RESISTING!
DURGAN IS MAD! HE REJECTS THE BASIC TENET OF OUR RACE!
RENOUNCE PEACE, DURGAN, AND YOU BECOME A MAN WITHOUT A WORLD!
CONTINUE TO CLING TO TO PEACE, OBISPO, AND WE WILL ALL BE WITHOUT A WORLD... AND OUR LIVES!
WE BID HIM BE GONE FROM THIS CHAMBER -- AND LO, HIS PLATFORM STILL STANDS EMPTY--
--AND NONE AMONG US HAVE SEEN HIM SINCE!
TO WHERE CAN THE HERETIC HAVE DISAPPEARED?
4


IT MATTERS NOT! WE HAVE MATTERS OF FAR GREATER CONCERN TO WHICH WE MUST ATTEND! LET US PUT OUR VISI-SCREENS AWAY AND PREPARE OURSELVES TO FACE INEVITABLE END!
BUT AMONG ALL THOSE PRESENT IN THE CHAMBER, THERE IS ONE YOUNG PHILOSOPHER WHO CONTINUES TO STUDY HIS SCREEN...
PURGAN WAS MY TEACHER... MY FRIEND! I CANNOT BELIEVE HE WOULD ABANDON US, EVEN TO SAVE HIMSELF!
THERE MUST BE A WAY TO LEARN WHERE HE HAS GONE, AND IF THERE IS, THEN I, TUSKAR, SHALL FIND HIM!
PERHAPS IF I PATCH MY VISI-SCREEN INTO THE MAIN COMPUTER DATA BANKS. HMM, CURIOUS, THERE SEEMS TO BE SOME SORT OF INTERFERENCE-- A DRAIN ON OUR PLANETARY COMPUTER HOOK-UP!
IT'S NOTHING MAJOR, AND WITH EVERY-ONE ELSE'S ATTENTION FOCUSED ON THE THREAT OF THE BLACK FLEET, NO ONE BUT MYSELF SEEMS TO HAVE NOTICED IT!
THIS MAY BEAR LOOKING INTO! I'LL BEGIN A CHECK ON THE SOURCE OF THE DRAIN AT ONCE!
WHILE A SHORT DISTANCE AWAY, IN AN ANCIENT MUSEUM THAT IS ALL BUT FORGOTTEN AMID THE MORE MODERN SPLENDORS OF THE PLANET--
--TWO UNUSUAL OBJECTS HOVER ABOVE THEIR DISPLAY PEDESTALS.
ONE IS A MATTER ENERGY-EGG...
THE OTHER, A BIO-GEM.
EACH PULSES AND GLOWS WITH ITS OWN ENERGY WAVELENGTHS.
BUT WHEN THE BIO-GEM PULSES, THERE IS A CORRESPONDING GLOW FROM THE NEARBY CONSOLE OF AN AGES-OLD COMPUTER!
THE GEM PULSES...
THE COMPUTER GLOWS...
...AND A PATTERN EMERGES. IT BECOMES CLEAR THAT THE GEM IS MANIPULATING THE COMPUTER'S FUNCTIONS.
THIS THEN IS THE DRAIN ON THE PLANET'S COMPUTER SYSTEM, FOR THE BIO-GEM IS USING THE COMPUTER TO BEAM TRANSMISSIONS --
5


THE FIRST OF THESE TRANSMISSIONS TRAVELS THROUGH THE DISTANCE-REDUCING WARPS OF HYPER-SPACE--
-- TO THE VERY PLANET BEING ATTACKED BY THE BLACK FLEET!
ANOTHER PLANET CONQUERED!
HAH! THIS ONE GAVE US EVEN LESS OF A FIGHT THAN THE LAST!
ENOUGH TALK! OUR GOAL LIES OVER THIS WAY, IN THE TOWN PLAZA!
OUR INSTRUMENTS WERE CORRECT! THERE IS YET ANOTHER FRAGMENT OF THE LEGENDARY BIO-GEM!
YES! BUT PROCEED WITH EXTREME CARE! AS ALWAYS, THE GEM IS GUARDED BY A NATTER ENERGY-EGG!
WHATEVER ANCIENT RACE MANAGED TO FRAGMENT THE BIO-GEM WAS UNABLE TO DESTROY IT COMPLETELY!
FEARING THE GEM'S POWER, THEY FOUND A WAY TO ENTRAP IT BY USING THE EGGS-- NATURAL NEMESES TO THE GEM.
WHENEVER A GEM TRIES TO BREAK FREE OF THE ENTRAPMENT, THE EGG EXPLODES, DESTROYING ITSELF AND THE GEM!
BUT WE HAVE FOUND A WAY TO NEUTRALIZE THE ENERGY-EGGS! AND MORE IMPORTANT--
-- WE HAVE FOUND A WAY TO ENSLAVE THE BIO-GEMS-- JUST AS WE ENSLAVE THIS ONE IN A BIO-MATTER HARNESS.
IN TIME, WHEN WE HAVE CAPTURED ALL THE EXISTING FRAGMENTS OF THE GEM, WE WILL REUNITE THEM-- AND WITH ALL THEIR POWER OURS TO COMMAND--
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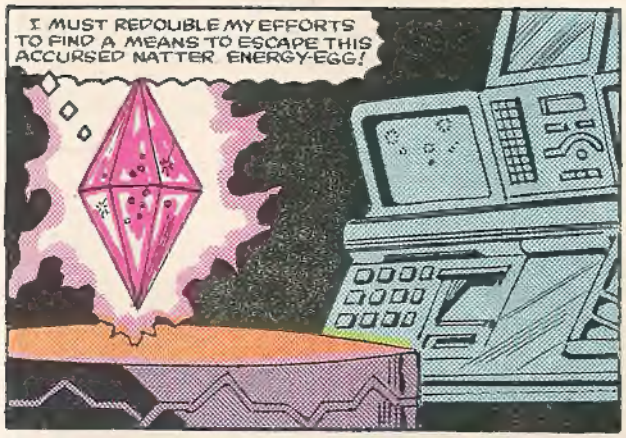
-- THE ENTIRE UNIVERSE WILL BOW DOWN BEFORE THE MIGHT OF THE BLACK FLEET!
EVEN AS THE BIO-GEM IS TRAPPED WITHIN THE CONFINES OF THE HARNESS, IT SENDS OUT ONE LAST DESPERATE SURGE BEFORE ITS CONSCIOUSNESS SUCCUMBS...

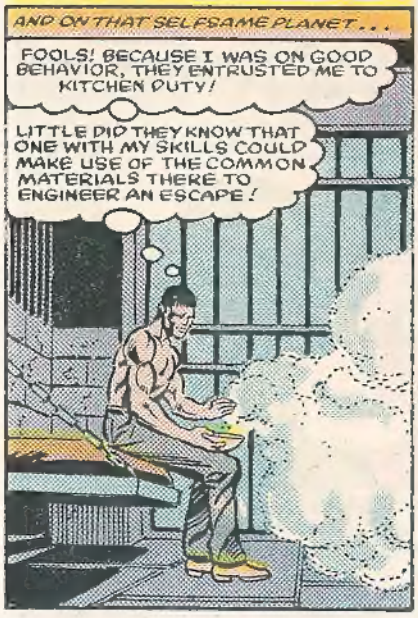
A SURGE THAT TRAVERSES LIGHT YEARS IN AN INSTANT TO CONVEY ITS PLIGHT TO ITS FELLOW GEM ON OURGAN'S FLEET.
NO! ANOTHER OF MY CRYSTAL-BROTHERS HAS BEEN BROUGHT UNDER THE SWAY OF THE BLACK FLEET!
SOON THEY WILL HAVE CAPTURED ALL OF US! THEN WE WILL NO LONGER HAVE THE FREE WILL TO PURSUE OUR GOAL--THE TOTAL DESTRUCTION OF ALL ORGANIC LIFE!


I MUST REDOUBLE MY EFFORTS TO FIND A MEANS TO ESCAPE THIS ACCURSED MATTER ENERGY-EGG!

AND IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER...
THAT'S STRANGE, NOW MY INSTRUMENTS INDICATE THAT THERE IS YET ANOTHER BEAM OF ENERGY BEING BROADCAST THROUGH THE COMPUTER SYSTEM--

--ONLY THIS ONE IS AIMED AT THAT UNIQUE PRIMITIVE PLANET PURGAN HAS SPENT SO MUCH TIME STUDYING OF LATE--

-- THE BLUE AND GREEN PLANET WHICH ITS INHABITANTS CALL... EARTH!


AND ON THAT SELFSAME PLANET...
FOOLS! BECAUSE I WAS ON GOOD BEHAVIOR, THEY ENTRUSTED ME TO KITCHEN DUTY!
LITTLE DID THEY KNOW THAT ONE WITH MY SKILLS COULD MAKE USE OF THE COMMON MATERIALS THERE TO ENGINEER AN ESCAPE!

FIRST I JUST CREATE A FINE MIST OF COMMON FLOUR--
THEN STRIKE A MATCH, AND...
SCRRITCH!

FIRE! HELP ME, MY CELL IS ON FIRE!

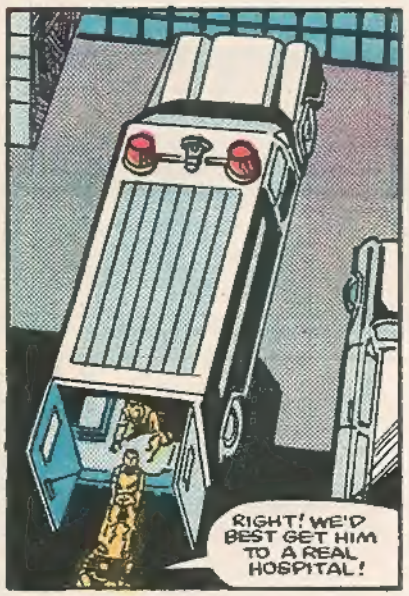
NOW, BEFORE ANY OF THE GUARDS CAN SHOW UP I'LL PUT ON THIS "PRE-BURNED" SHIRT I PREPARED--

AND APPLY THIS "BURNED SKIN" MASK I MADE FROM A MIXTURE OF CORNSTARCH AND FOOD COLORING!
MAKESHIFT, AND CERTAINLY NOT UP TO MY USUAL STANDARDS--BUT IT SHOULD SUFFICE!

WHAT'S GOING ON...? THERE IS A FIRE IN QUENTIN BECK'S CELL!
HURRY, BRING THE FIRE HOSE!

THERE, THAT SEEMS TO BE CONTROLLING IT! CAN YOU SEE BECK?
YEAH-- AND HE DOESN'T LOOK GOOD!

C'MON, WE'D BETTER HUSTLE HIM ON DOWN TO THE MOTOR POOL! HIS BURNS LOOK FAR TOO SERIOUS TO BE TREATED AT THE PRISON INFIRMARY!
OOHHH!


RIGHT! WE'D BEST GET HIM TO A REAL HOSPITAL!

DID YOU SEE HIS FACE? IT-IT WAS...
I KNOW! I'LL GET IN THE BACK AND TRY TO ADMINISTER SOME FIRST AID!
BUT TO TELL YOU THE TRUTH--I DOUBT HE'LL MAKE IT TO THE HOSPITAL!

YOU COULDN'T BE MORE RIGHT! HOW THOUGHTFUL OF YOU TO KEEP TWO TANKS OF ANESTHETIC GAS HANDY FOR ME!
ENJOY YOUR NAP, BOYS!

NEXT STOP... THE DAILY BUGLE!
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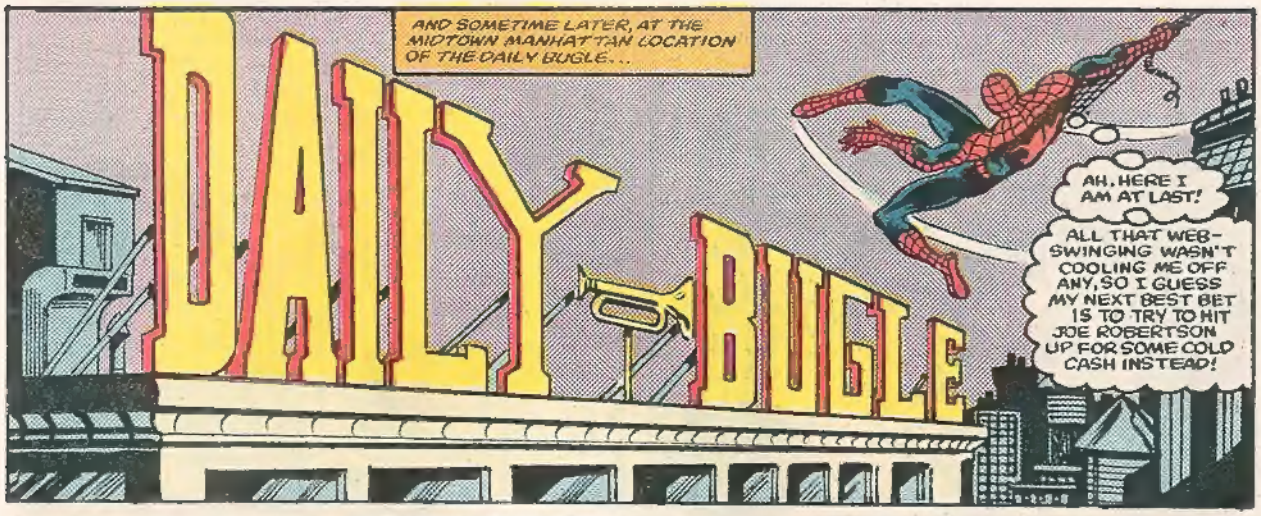
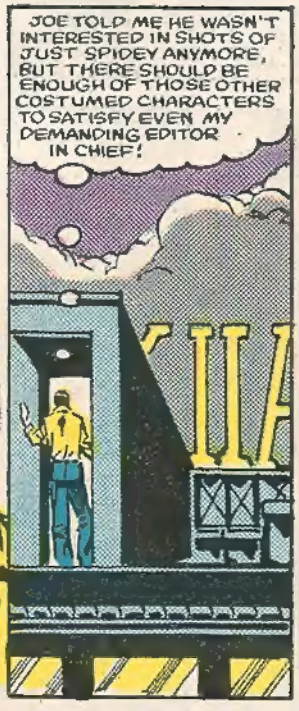
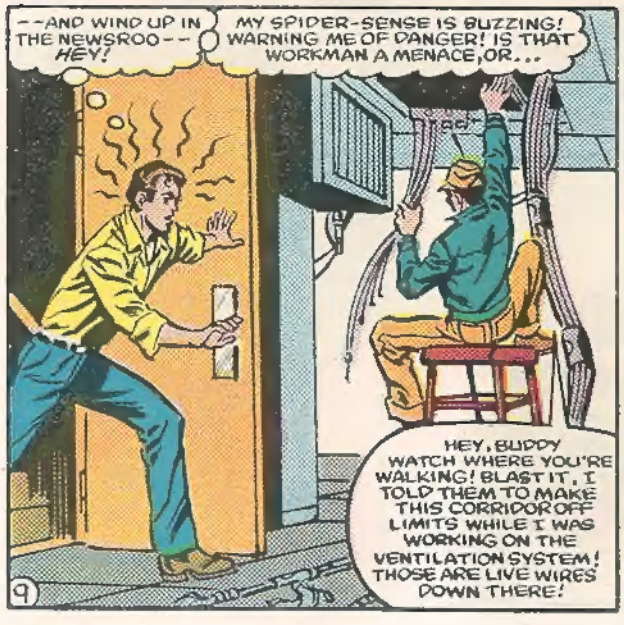

AND SOMETIME LATER, AT THE MIDTOWN MANHATTAN LOCATION OF THE DAILY BUGLE...
DAILY BUGLE
AH, HERE I AM AT LAST!
ALL THAT WEB-SWINGING WASN'T COOLING ME OFF ANY, SO I GUESS MY NEXT BEST BET IS TO TRY TO HIT JOE ROBERTSON UP FOR SOME COLD CASH INSTEAD!

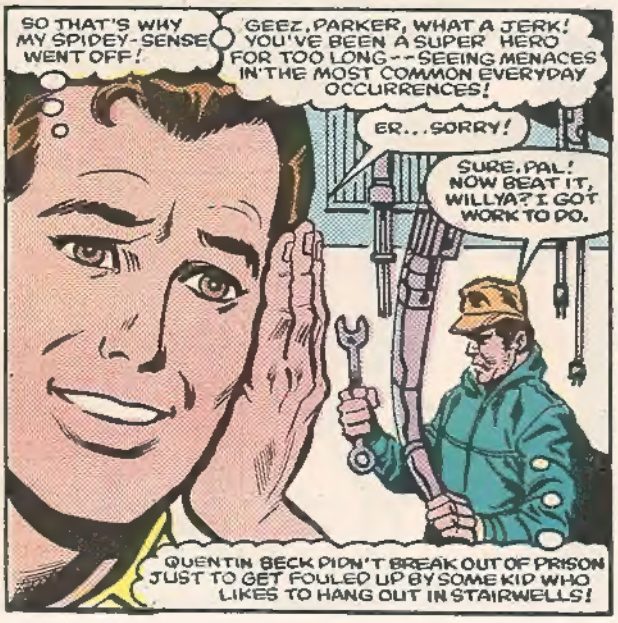
GOOD THING I HAD A SET OF PETER PARKER DUDS STASHED ON THE ROOF OF THE BUILDING.

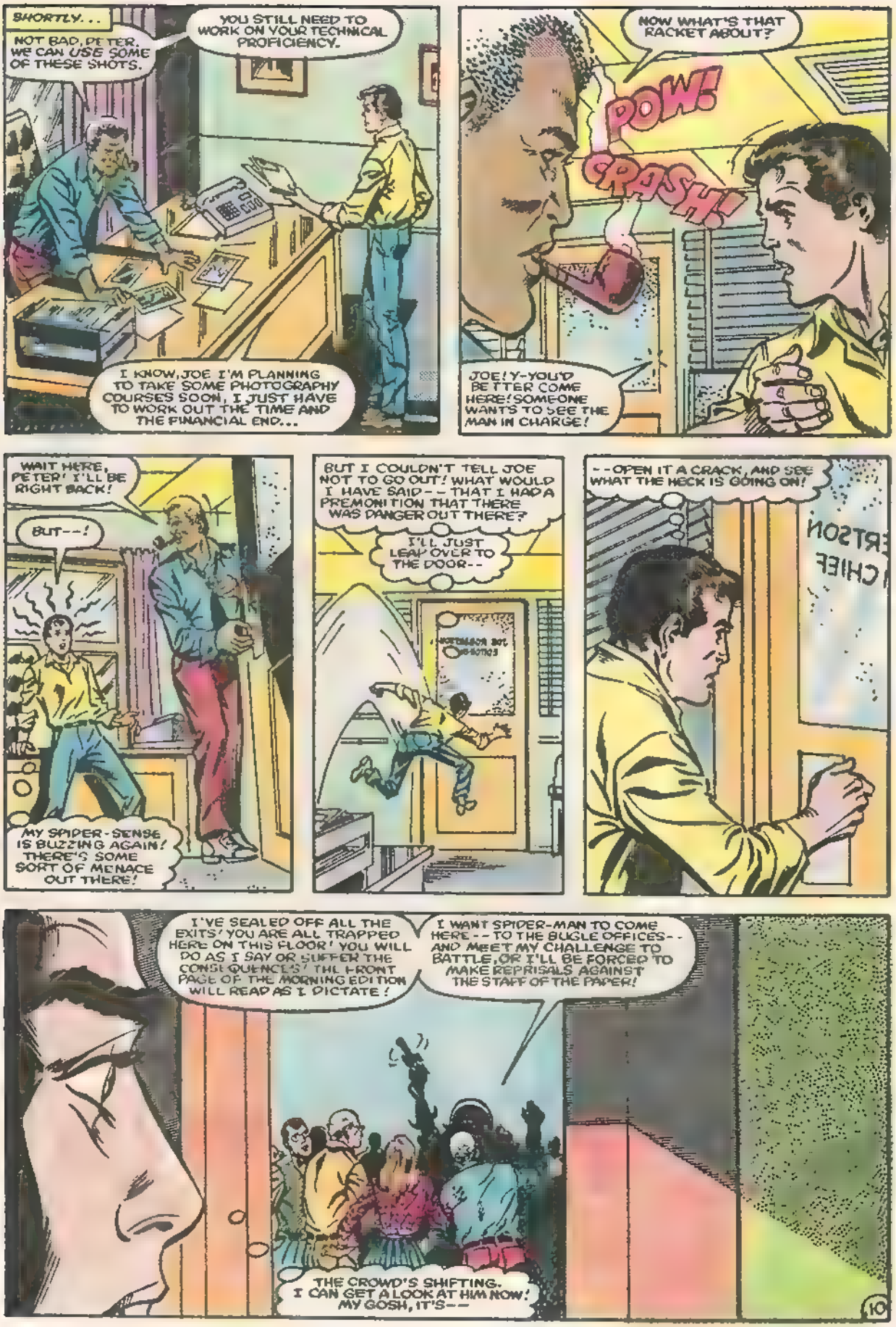
I DID MANAGE TO GET SOME SHOTS OF THE BATTLE THE BLACK CAT AND I HAD WITH CLOAK AND DAGGER, SILVERMANE, THE ANSWER AND THE KINGPIN.*
MAYBE I CAN SELL JOE SOME OF THEM!
* AS SEEN IN PETER PARKER #'S 94-96 -- BOB.

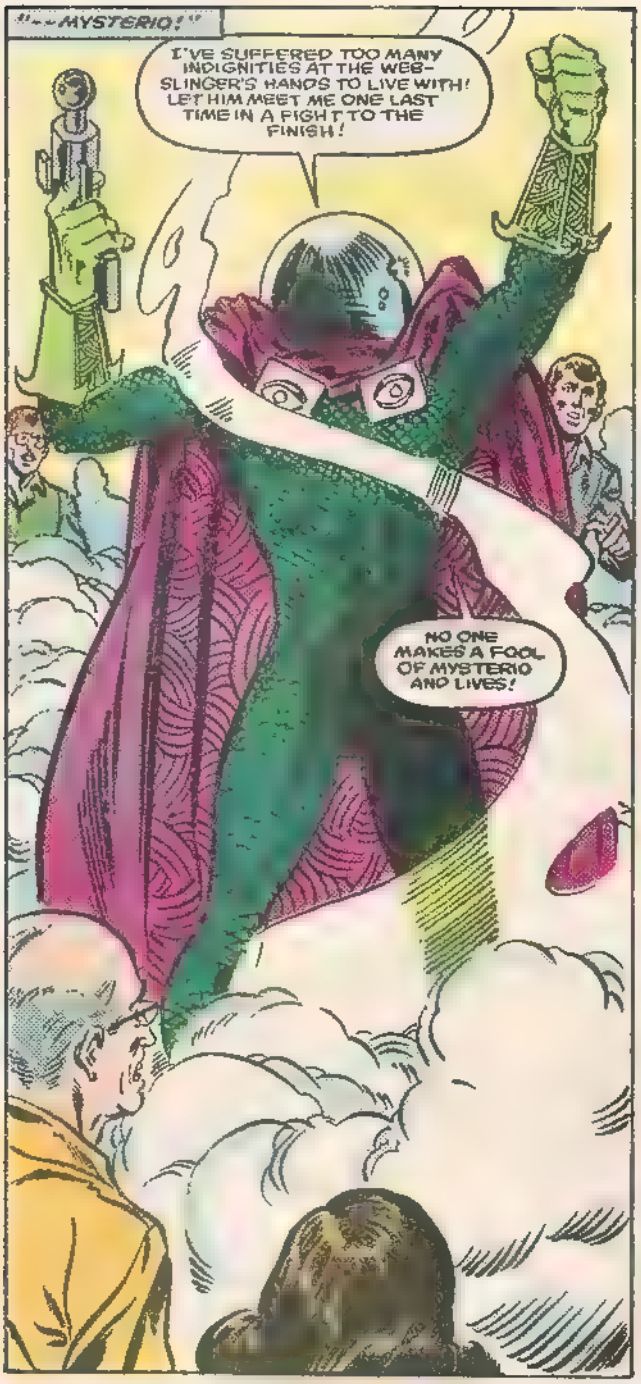

JOE TOLD ME HE WASN'T INTERESTED IN SHOTS OF JUST SPIDEY ANYMORE, BUT THERE SHOULD BE ENOUGH OF THOSE OTHER COSTUMED CHARACTERS TO SATISFY EVEN MY DEMANDING EDITOR IN CHIEF!

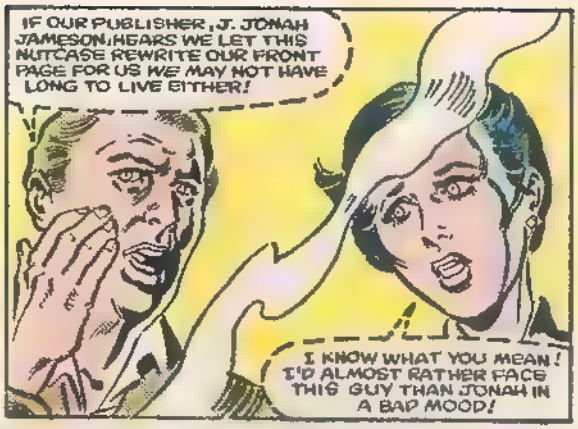
I HOPE THERE'S ENOUGH TIME TO GET THEM DEVELOPED FOR THE MORNING EDITION!
-- I'LL JUST TAKE THE OLD STAIRWAY DOWN FROM THE ROOF --

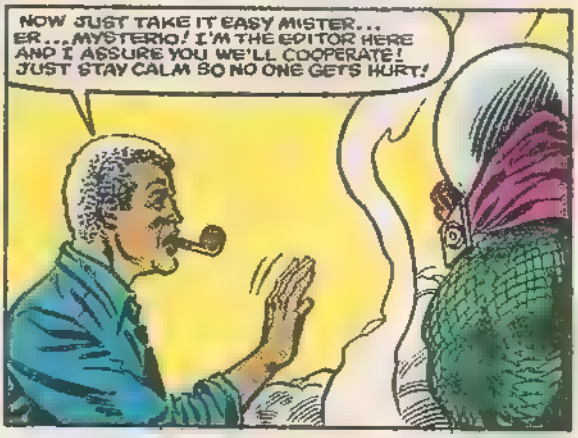

--AND WIND UP IN THE NEWSROO--
HEY!
MY SPIDER-SENSE IS BUZZING! WARNING ME OF DANGER! IS THAT WORKMAN A MENACE, OR...
HEY, BUDDY WATCH WHERE YOU'RE WALKING! BLAST IT, I TOLD THEM TO MAKE THIS CORRIDOR OFF LIMITS WHILE I WAS WORKING ON THE VENTILATION SYSTEM! THOSE ARE LIVE WIRES DOWN THERE!
9

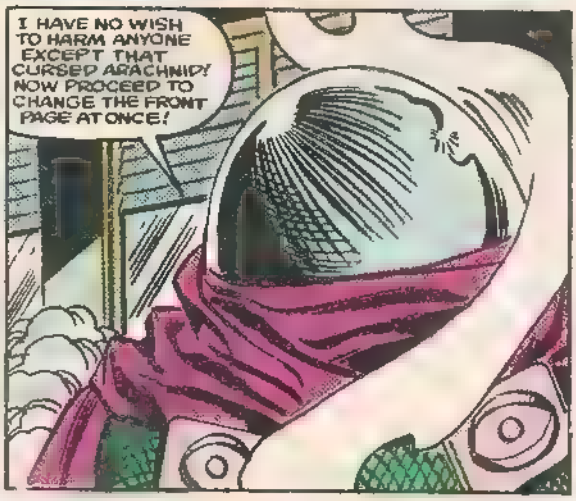

SO THAT'S WHY MY SPIDEY-SENSE WENT OFF!
GEEZ, PARKER, WHAT A JERK! YOU'VE BEEN A SUPER HERO FOR TOO LONG -- SEEING MENACES IN THE MOST COMMON EVERYDAY OCCURRENCES!
ER... SORRY!
SURE, PAL! NOW BEAT IT, WILLYA? I GOT WORK TO DO.
QUENTIN BECK DIDN'T BREAK OUT OF PRISON JUST TO GET FOULED UP BY SOME KID WHO LIKES TO HANG OUT IN STAIRWELLS!

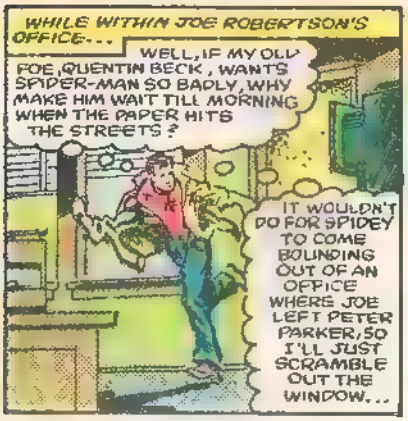

SHORTLY...
NOT BAD, PETER. WE CAN USE SOME OF THESE SHOTS.
YOU STILL NEED TO WORK ON YOUR TECHNICAL PROFICIENCY.
I KNOW, JOE I'M PLANNING TO TAKE SOME PHOTOGRAPHY COURSES SOON, I JUST HAVE TO WORK OUT THE TIME AND THE FINANCIAL END...
NOW WHAT'S THAT RACKET ABOUT?
POW!
CRASH!
JOE! Y-YOU'D BETTER COME HERE! SOMEONE WANTS TO SEE THE MAN IN CHARGE!
WAIT HERE, PETER! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!
BUT--!
MY SPIDER-SENSE IS BUZZING AGAIN! THERE'S SOME SORT OF MENACE OUT THERE!
BUT I COULDN'T TELL JOE NOT TO GO OUT! WHAT WOULD I HAVE SAID -- THAT I HAD A PREMONITION THAT THERE WAS DANGER OUT THERE?
I'LL JUST LEAP OVER TO THE DOOR--
--OPEN IT A CRACK, AND SEE WHAT THE HECK IS GOING ON!
I'VE SEALED OFF ALL THE EXITS! YOU ARE ALL TRAPPED HERE ON THIS FLOOR! YOU WILL DO AS I SAY OR SUFFER THE CONSEQUENCES! THE FRONT PAGE OF THE MORNING EDITION WILL READ AS I DICTATE!
I WANT SPIDER-MAN TO COME HERE -- TO THE BUGLE OFFICES -- AND MEET MY CHALLENGE TO BATTLE, OR I'LL BE FORCED TO MAKE REPRISALS AGAINST THE STAFF OF THE PAPER!
THE CROWD'S SHIFTING. I CAN GET A LOOK AT HIM NOW! MY GOSH, IT'S--
10

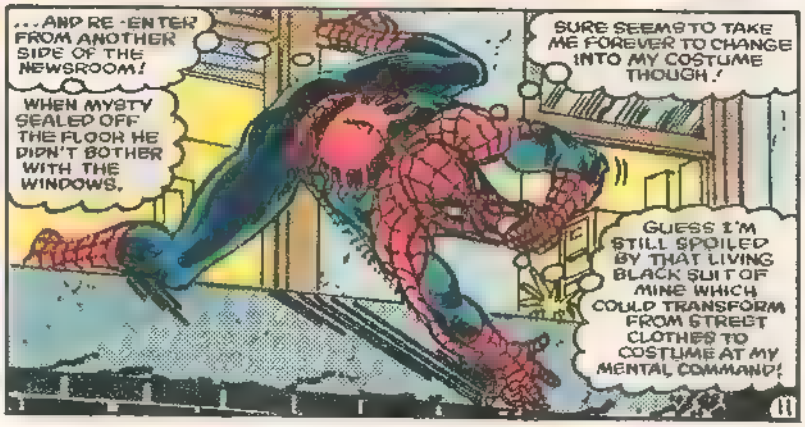

"--MYSTERIO!"
I'VE SUFFERED TOO MANY INDIGNITIES AT THE WEB-SLINGER'S HANDS TO LIVE WITH! LET HIM MEET ME ONE LAST TIME IN A FIGHT TO THE FINISH!
NO ONE MAKES A FOOL OF MYSTERIO AND LIVES!

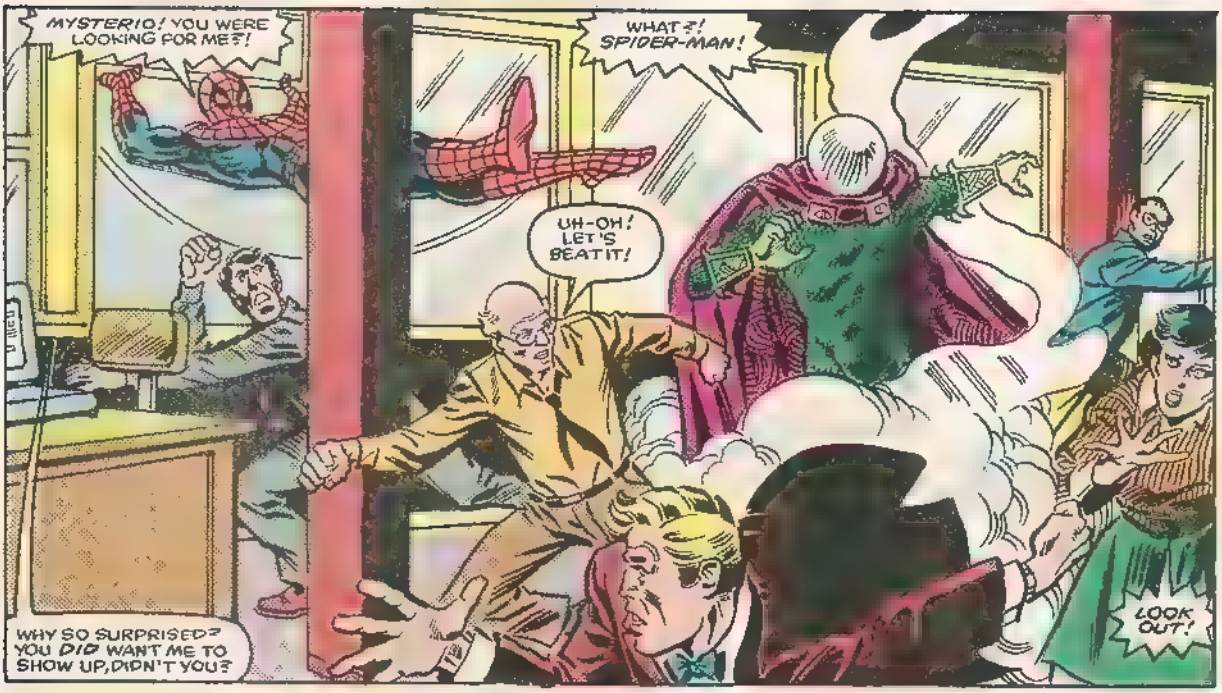

IF OUR PUBLISHER, J. JONAH JAMESON, HEARS WE LET THIS NUTCASE REWRITE OUR FRONT PAGE FOR US WE MAY NOT HAVE LONG TO LIVE EITHER!
I KNOW WHAT YOU MEAN! I'D ALMOST RATHER FACE THIS GUY THAN JONAH IN A BAD MOOD!

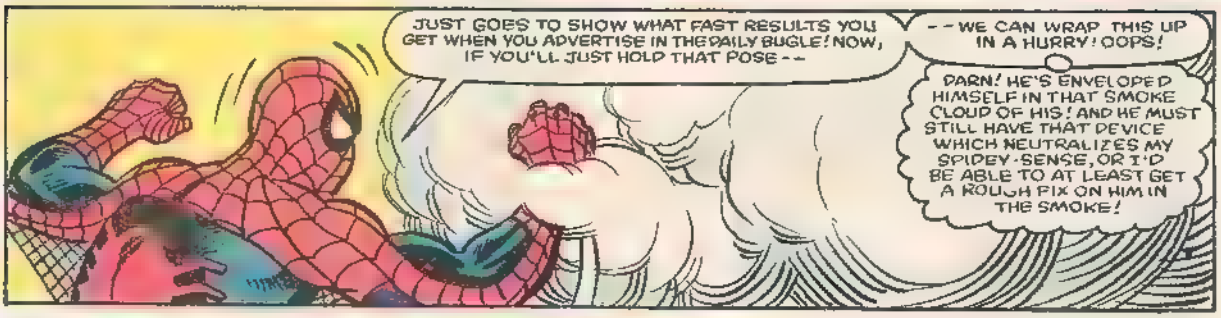

NOW JUST TAKE IT EASY MISTER... ER...MYSTERIO! I'M THE EDITOR HERE AND I ASSURE YOU WE'LL COOPERATE! JUST STAY CALM SO NO ONE GETS HURT!

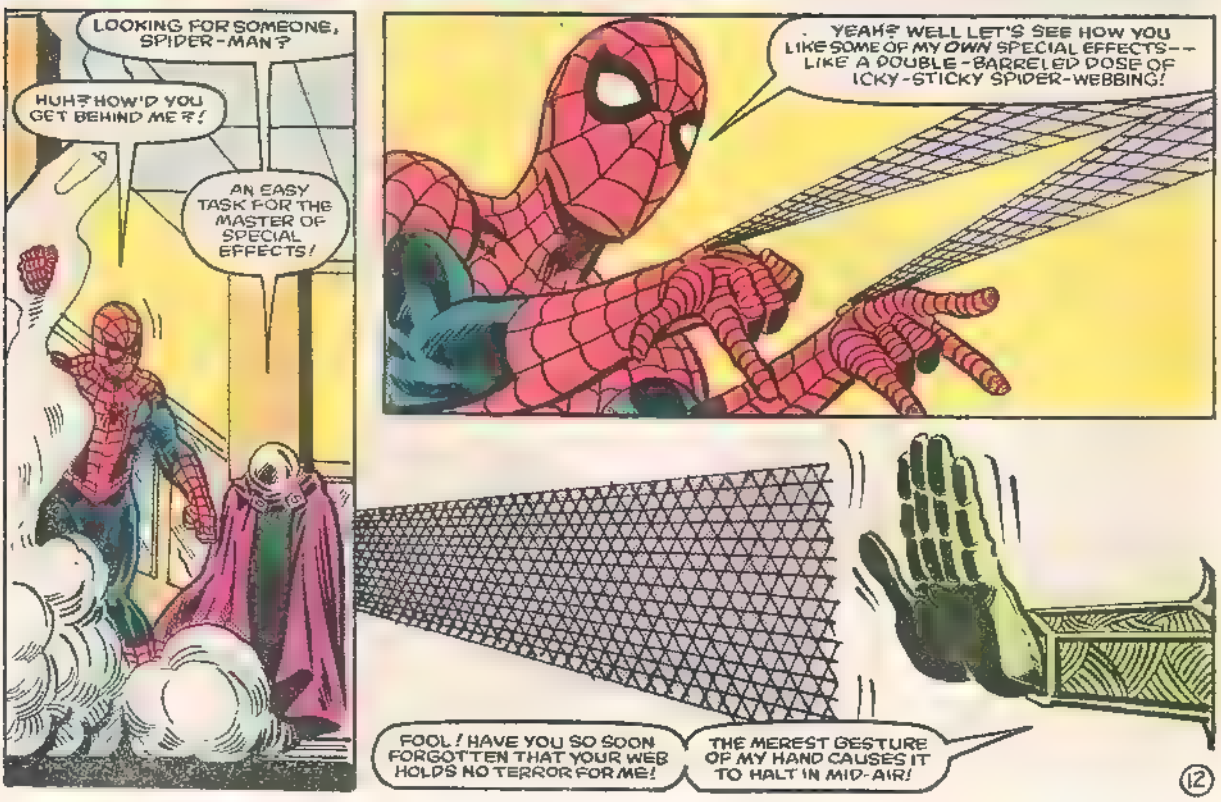

I HAVE NO WISH TO HARM ANYONE EXCEPT THAT CURSED ARACHNID! NOW PROCEED TO CHANGE THE FRONT PAGE AT ONCE!

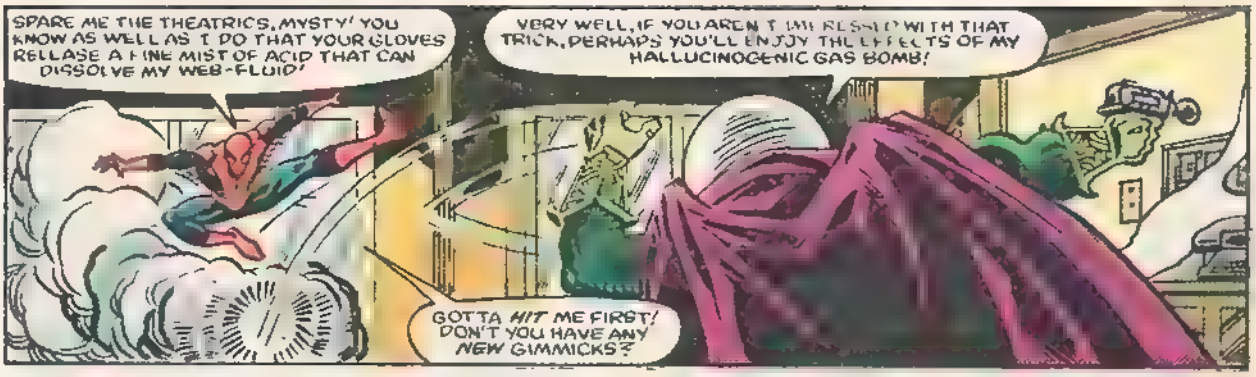

WHILE WITHIN JOE ROBERTSON'S OFFICE...
WELL, IF MY OLD FOE, QUENTIN BECK, WANTS SPIDER-MAN SO BADLY, WHY MAKE HIM WAIT TILL MORNING WHEN THE PAPER HITS THE STREETS?
IT WOULDN'T DO FOR SPIDEY TO COME BOUNDING OUT OF AN OFFICE WHERE JOE LEFT PETER PARKER, SO I'LL JUST SCRAMBLE OUT THE WINDOW...

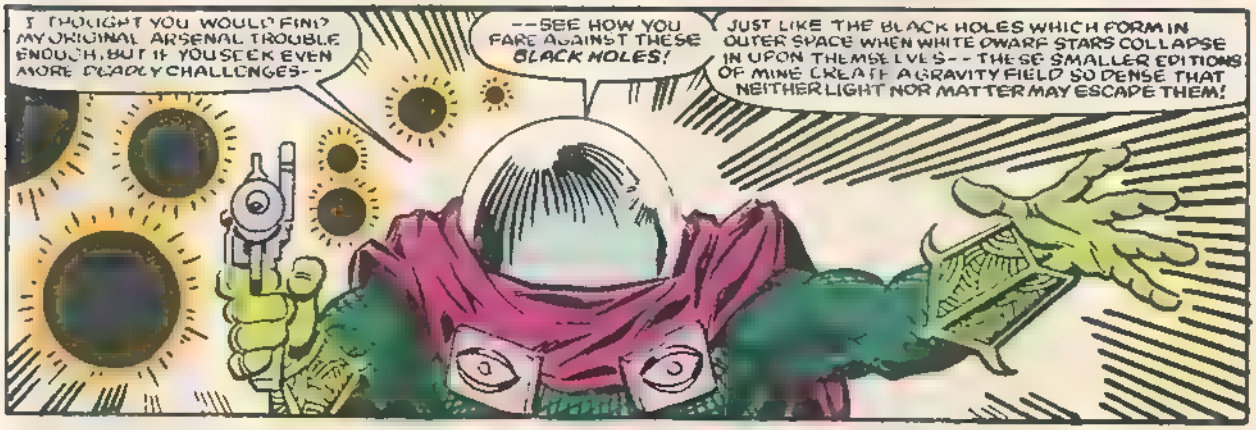

...AND RE-ENTER FROM ANOTHER SIDE OF THE NEWSROOM!
WHEN MYSTY SEALED OFF THE FLOOR HE DIDN'T BOTHER WITH THE WINDOWS.
SURE SEEMS TO TAKE ME FOREVER TO CHANGE INTO MY COSTUME THOUGH!
GUESS I'M STILL SPOILED BY THAT LIVING BLACK SUIT OF MINE WHICH COULD TRANSFORM FROM STREET CLOTHES TO COSTUME AT MY MENTAL COMMAND!

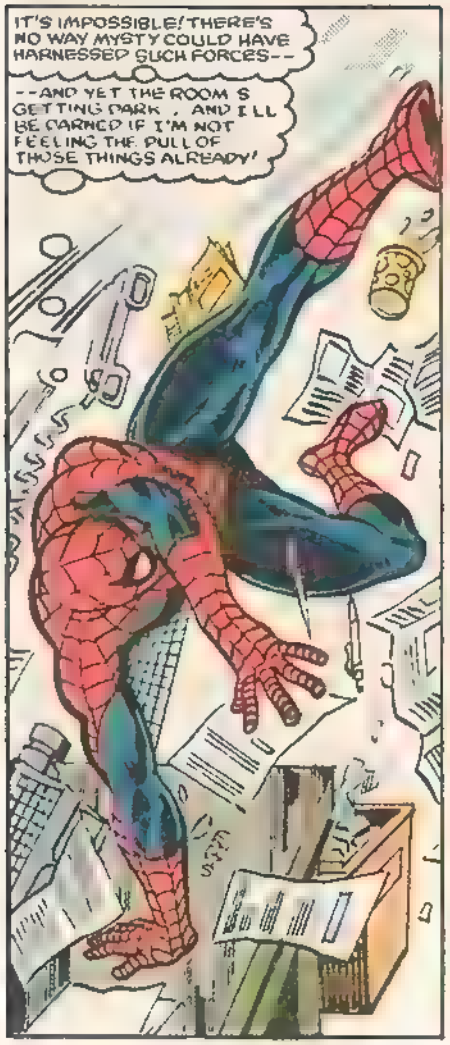

MYSTERIO! YOU WERE LOOKING FOR ME?!
WHAT?! SPIDER-MAN!
UH-OH! LET'S BEAT IT!
WHY SO SURPRISED? YOU DID WANT ME TO SHOW UP, DIDN'T YOU?
LOOK OUT!

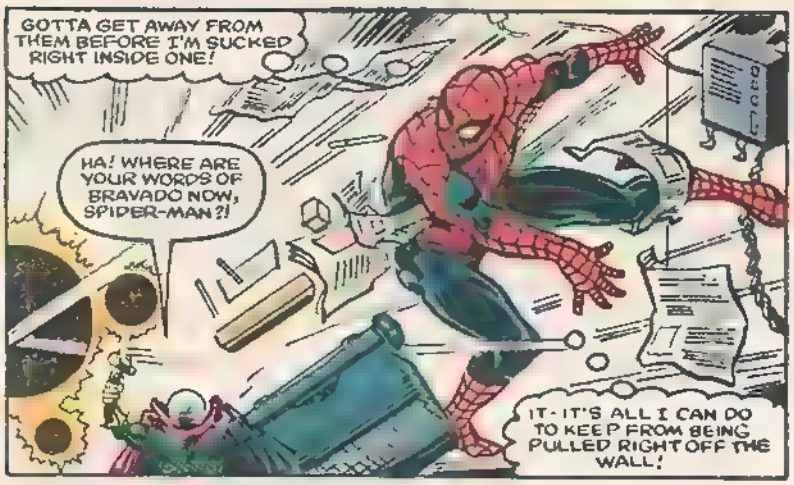

JUST GOES TO SHOW WHAT FAST RESULTS YOU GET WHEN YOU ADVERTISE IN THE DAILY BUGLE! NOW, IF YOU'LL JUST HOLD THAT POSE - -
- - WE CAN WRAP THIS UP IN A HURRY! OOPS!
DARN! HE'S ENVELOPED HIMSELF IN THAT SMOKE CLOUD OF HIS! AND HE MUST STILL HAVE THAT DEVICE WHICH NEUTRALIZES MY SPIDEY-SENSE, OR I'D BE ABLE TO AT LEAST GET A ROUGH PIX ON HIM IN THE SMOKE!

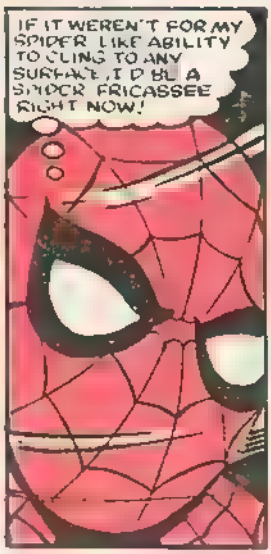

LOOKING FOR SOMEONE, SPIDER-MAN?
HUH? HOW'D YOU GET BEHIND ME?!
AN EASY TASK FOR THE MASTER OF SPECIAL EFFECTS!
YEAH? WELL LET'S SEE HOW YOU LIKE SOME OF MY OWN SPECIAL EFFECTS - - LIKE A DOUBLE-BARRELED DOSE OF ICKY-STICKY SPIDER-WEBBING!
FOOL! HAVE YOU SO SOON FORGOTTEN THAT YOUR WEB HOLDS NO TERROR FOR ME!
THE MEREST GESTURE OF MY HAND CAUSES IT TO HALT IN MID-AIR!


SPARE ME THE THEATRICS, MYSTY! YOU KNOW AS WELL AS I DO THAT YOUR GLOVES RELEASE A FINE MIST OF ACID THAT CAN DISSOLVE MY WEB-FLUID!
VERY WELL, IF YOU AREN'T IMPRESSED WITH THAT TRICK, PERHAPS YOU'LL ENJOY THE EFFECTS OF MY HALLUCINOGENIC GAS BOMB!
GOTTA HIT ME FIRST! DON'T YOU HAVE ANY NEW GIMMICKS?

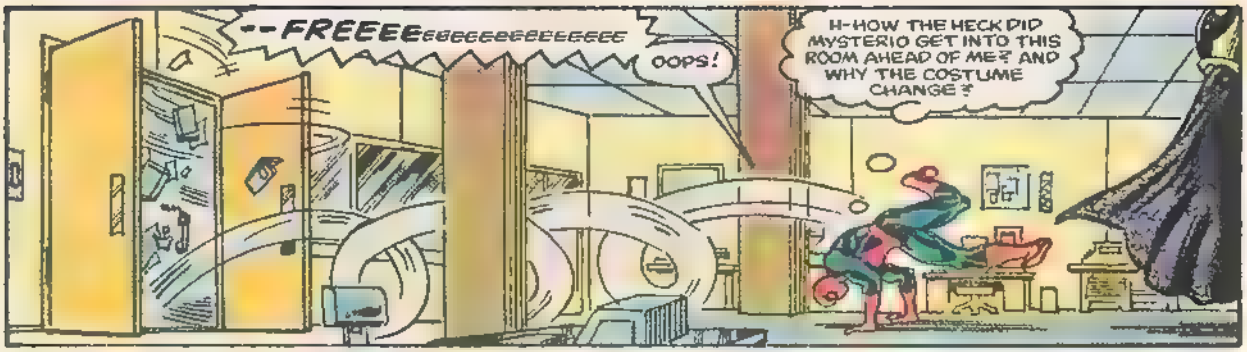

I THOUGHT YOU WOULD FIND MY ORIGINAL ARSENAL TROUBLE ENOUGH, BUT IF YOU SEEK EVEN MORE DEADLY CHALLENGES--
--SEE HOW YOU FARE AGAINST THESE BLACK HOLES!
JUST LIKE THE BLACK HOLES WHICH FORM IN OUTER SPACE WHEN WHITE DWARF STARS COLLAPSE IN UPON THEMSELVES--THESE SMALLER EDITIONS OF MINE CREATE A GRAVITY FIELD SO DENSE THAT NEITHER LIGHT NOR MATTER MAY ESCAPE THEM!


IT'S IMPOSSIBLE! THERE'S NO WAY MYSTY COULD HAVE HARNESSED SUCH FORCES--
--AND YET THE ROOM IS GETTING DARK, AND I'LL BE DARNED IF I'M NOT FEELING THE PULL OF THOSE THINGS ALREADY!


GOTTA GET AWAY FROM THEM BEFORE I'M SUCKED RIGHT INSIDE ONE!
HA! WHERE ARE YOUR WORDS OF BRAVADO NOW, SPIDER-MAN?!
IT-IT'S ALL I CAN DO TO KEEP FROM BEING PULLED RIGHT OFF THE WALL!

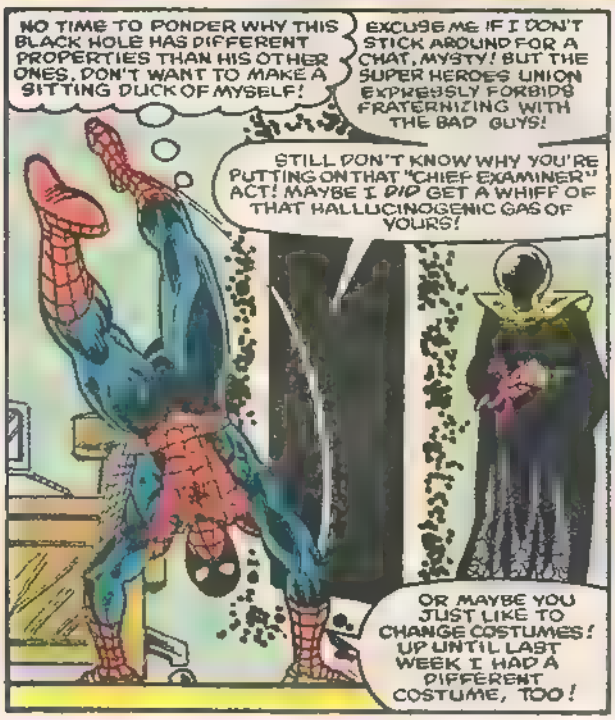

IF IT WEREN'T FOR MY SPIDER-LIKE ABILITY TO CLING TO ANY SURFACE, I'D BE A SPIDER FRICASSEE RIGHT NOW!

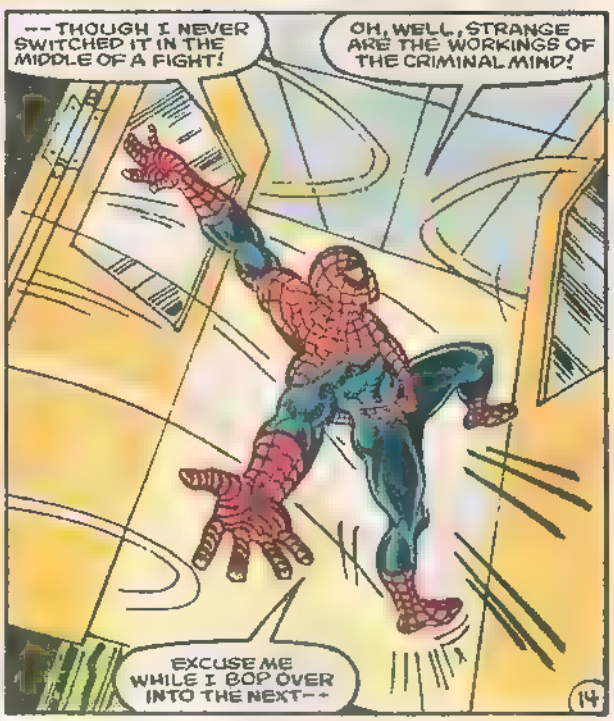
IT'S TAKING EVERY OUNCE OF MY STRENGTH TO RESIST! GOTTA GET THIS DOOR OPEN--GET AWAY FROM THOSE HOLES!
GOTTA BREAK--
13

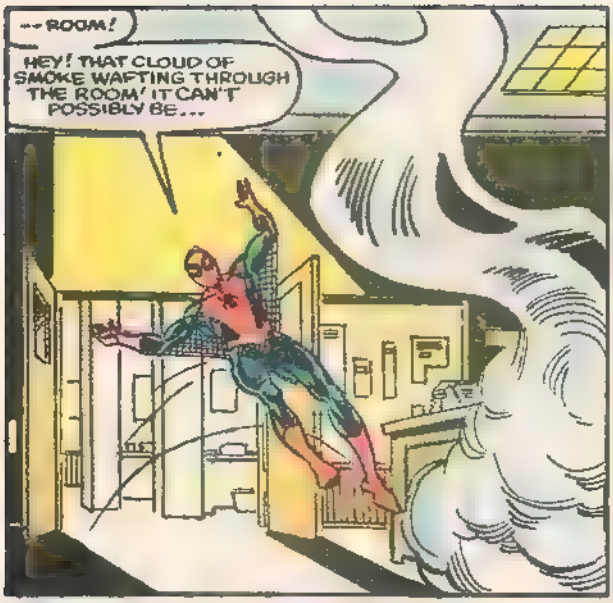

--FREEEEeeeeeeeeeeeeee
OOPS!
H-HOW THE HECK DID MYSTERIO GET INTO THIS ROOM AHEAD OF ME? AND WHY THE COSTUME CHANGE?

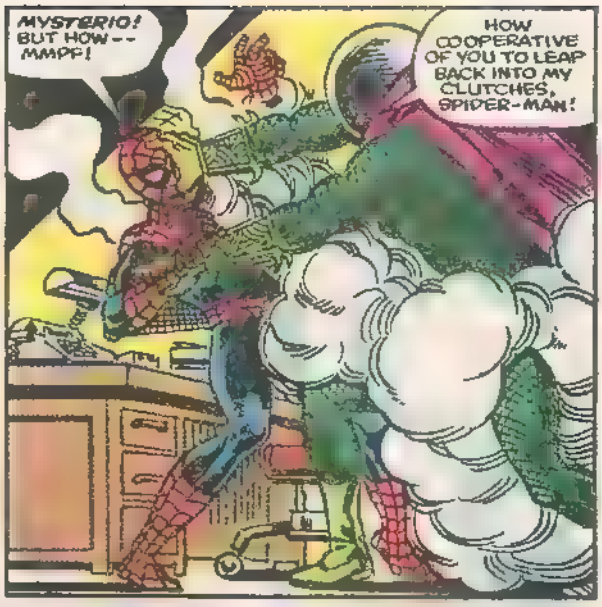
DER-MAN, I AM CALLED THE CHIEF EXAMINER.
UH-HUH! YOU SWITCH NAMES EVERY TIME YOU CHANGE CLOTHES, MYSTY?

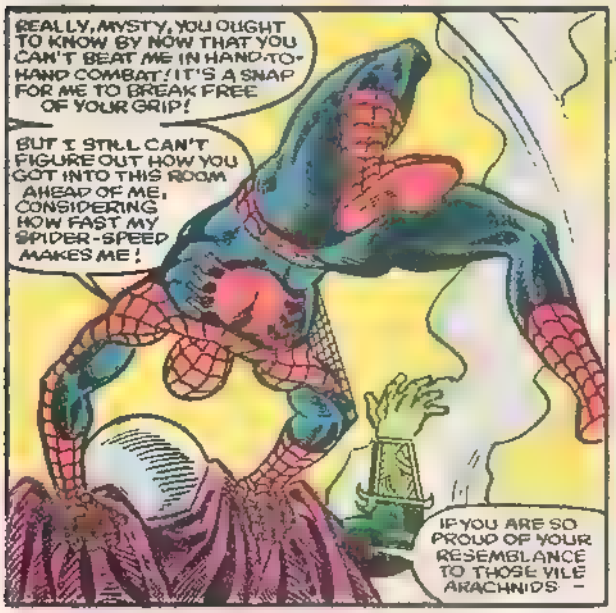
I SEEK THE SECRETS OF YOUR SPIDER-POWERS! FOR ME TO LEARN THEM YOU MUST PASS THROUGH THIS PORTAL!
NOT ON YOUR LIFE, PAL! I JUST GOT FREE FROM YOUR LAST BATCH OF BLACK HOLE GIZMOS--
-- I'M NOT ABOUT TO GO JUMPING INTO THIS ONE VOLUNTARILY!
FUNNY, THOUGH! THIS ONE DOESN'T SEEM TO BE GENERATING THE KIND OF INTENSIFIED GRAVITY FIELD THE OTHER ONES DID!
THWIP
MAYBE I CAN SNAG MYSTY WITH MY WEBBING NOW THAT HIS GUARD'S DOWN!
NO GOOD! SOMEHOW THAT PORTAL OF MYSTY'S SEEMS TO HAVE TAKEN ALL THE MOMENTUM OUT OF MY WEBBING! IT'S FALLING SHORT BEFORE IT CAN REACH HIM!

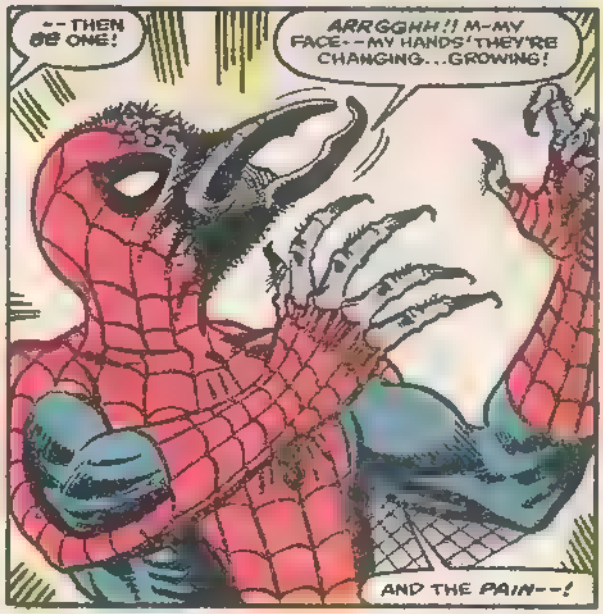

NO TIME TO PONDER WHY THIS BLACK HOLE HAS DIFFERENT PROPERTIES THAN HIS OTHER ONES. DON'T WANT TO MAKE A SITTING DUCK OF MYSELF!
EXCUSE ME IF I DON'T STICK AROUND FOR A CHAT, MYSTY! BUT THE SUPER HEROES UNION EXPRESSLY FORBIDS FRATERNIZING WITH THE BAD GUYS!
STILL DON'T KNOW WHY YOU'RE PUTTING ON THAT "CHIEF EXAMINER" ACT! MAYBE I DID GET A WHIFF OF THAT HALLUCINOGENIC GAS OF YOURS!
OR MAYBE YOU JUST LIKE TO CHANGE COSTUMES! UP UNTIL LAST WEEK I HAD A DIFFERENT COSTUME, TOO!

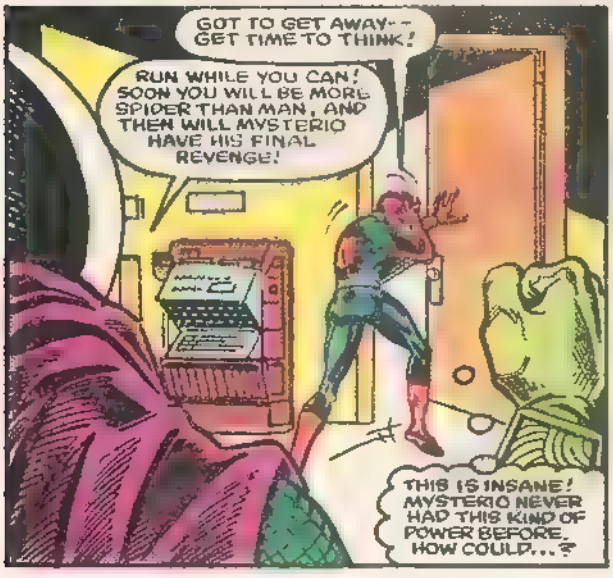

-- THOUGH I NEVER SWITCHED IT IN THE MIDDLE OF A FIGHT!
OH, WELL, STRANGE ARE THE WORKINGS OF THE CRIMINAL MIND!
EXCUSE ME WHILE I BOP OVER INTO THE NEXT--

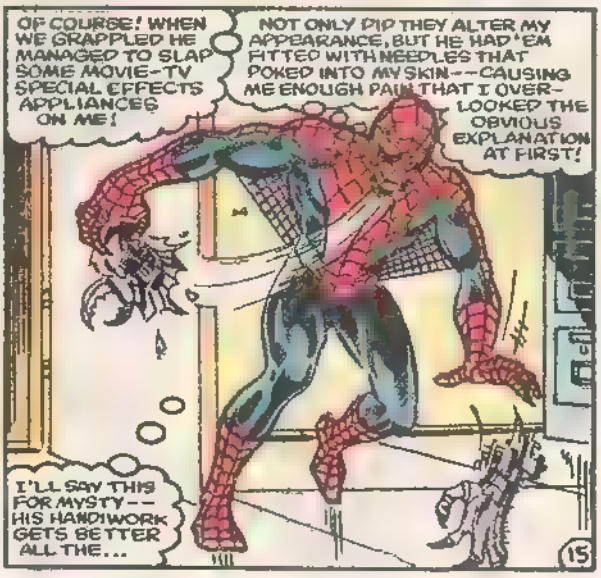

--ROOM!
HEY! THAT CLOUD OF SMOKE WAFTING THROUGH THE ROOM! IT CAN'T POSSIBLY BE...

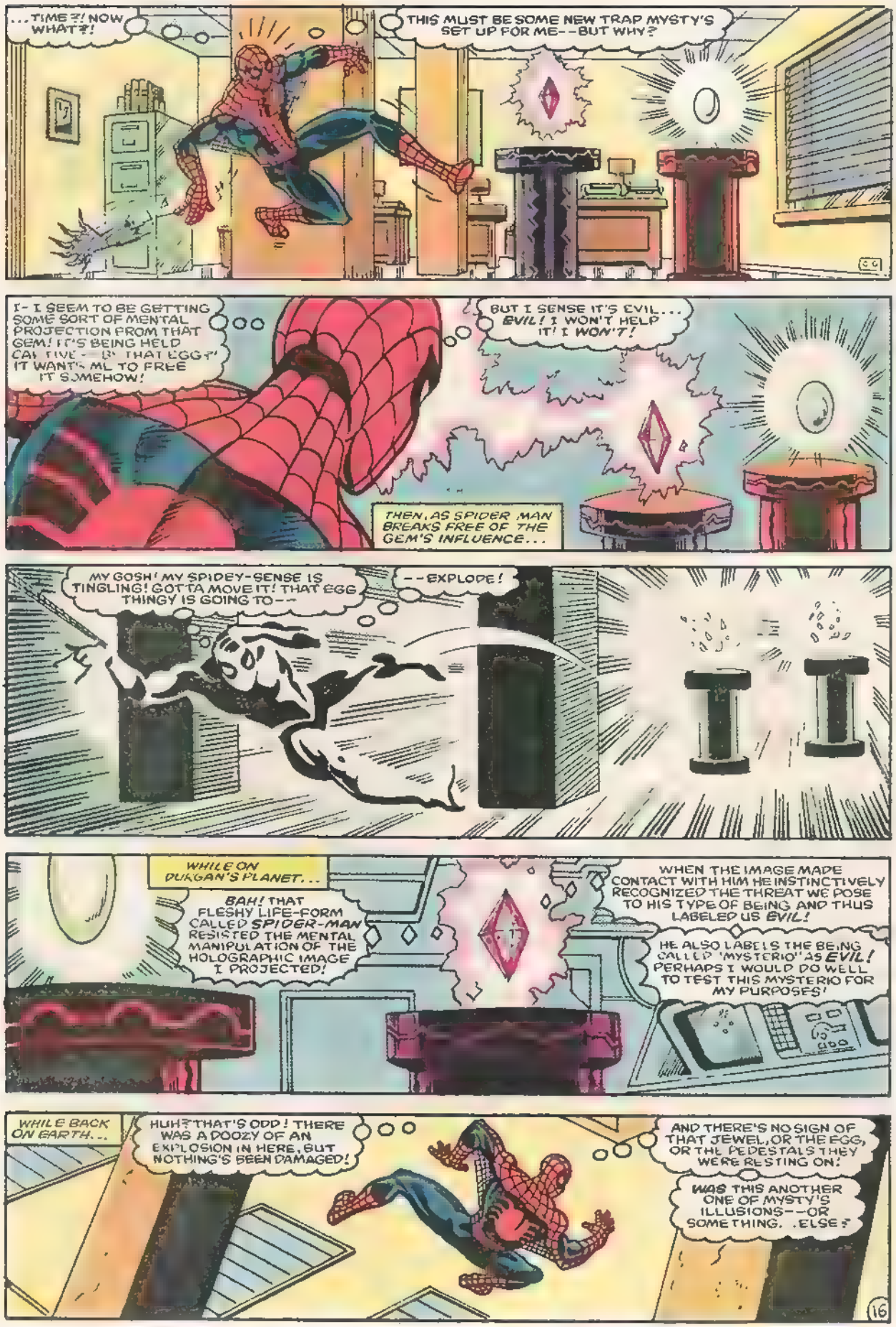

MYSTERIO! BUT HOW--MMPP!
HOW COOPERATIVE OF YOU TO LEAP BACK INTO MY CLUTCHES, SPIDER-MAN!

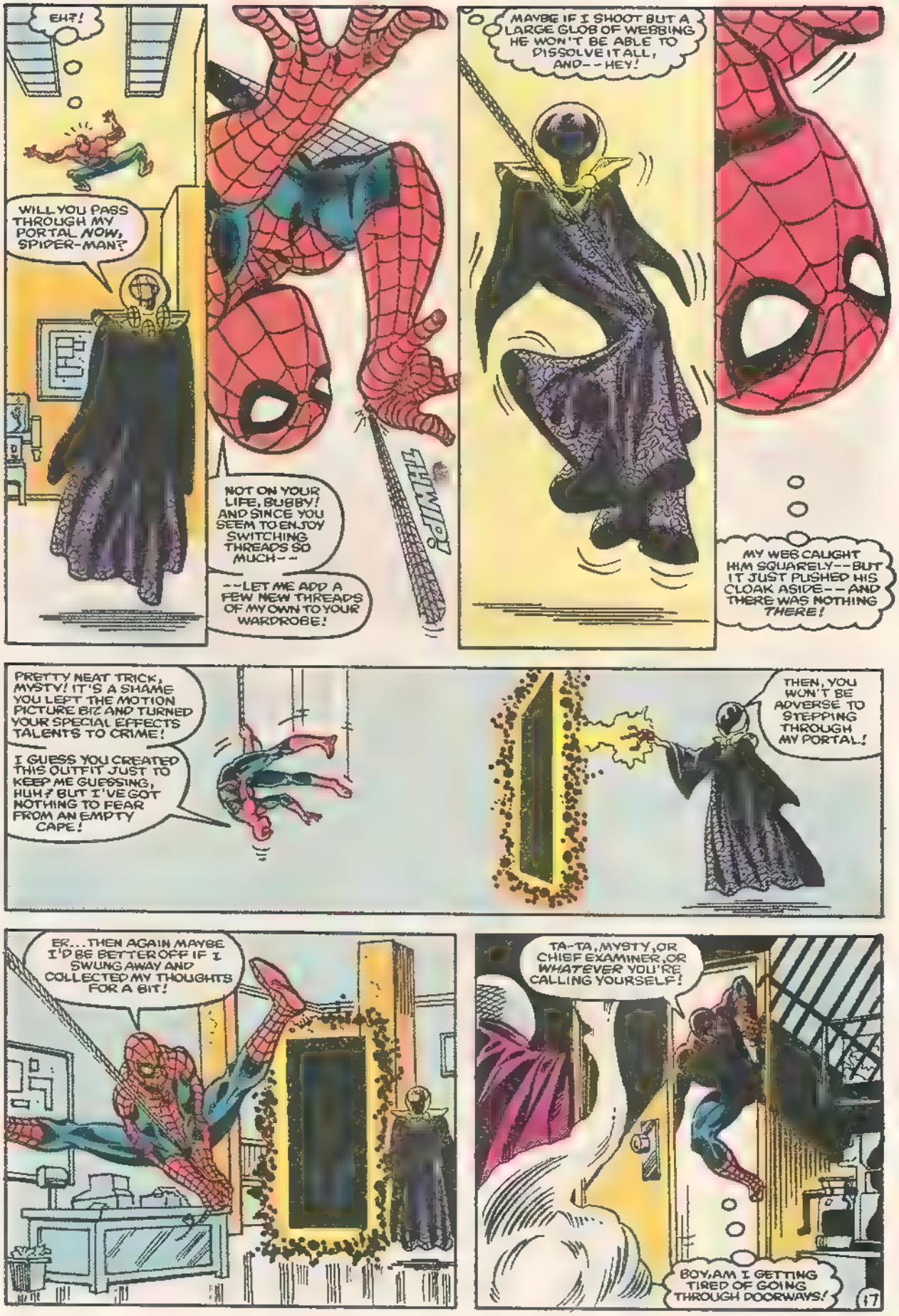

REALLY, MYSTY, YOU OUGHT TO KNOW BY NOW THAT YOU CAN'T BEAT ME IN HAND-TO-HAND COMBAT! IT'S A SNAP FOR ME TO BREAK FREE OF YOUR GRIP!
BUT I STILL CAN'T FIGURE OUT HOW YOU GOT INTO THIS ROOM AHEAD OF ME, CONSIDERING HOW FAST MY SPIDER-SPEED MAKES ME!
IF YOU ARE SO PROUD OF YOUR RESEMBLANCE TO THOSE VILE ARACHNIDS -

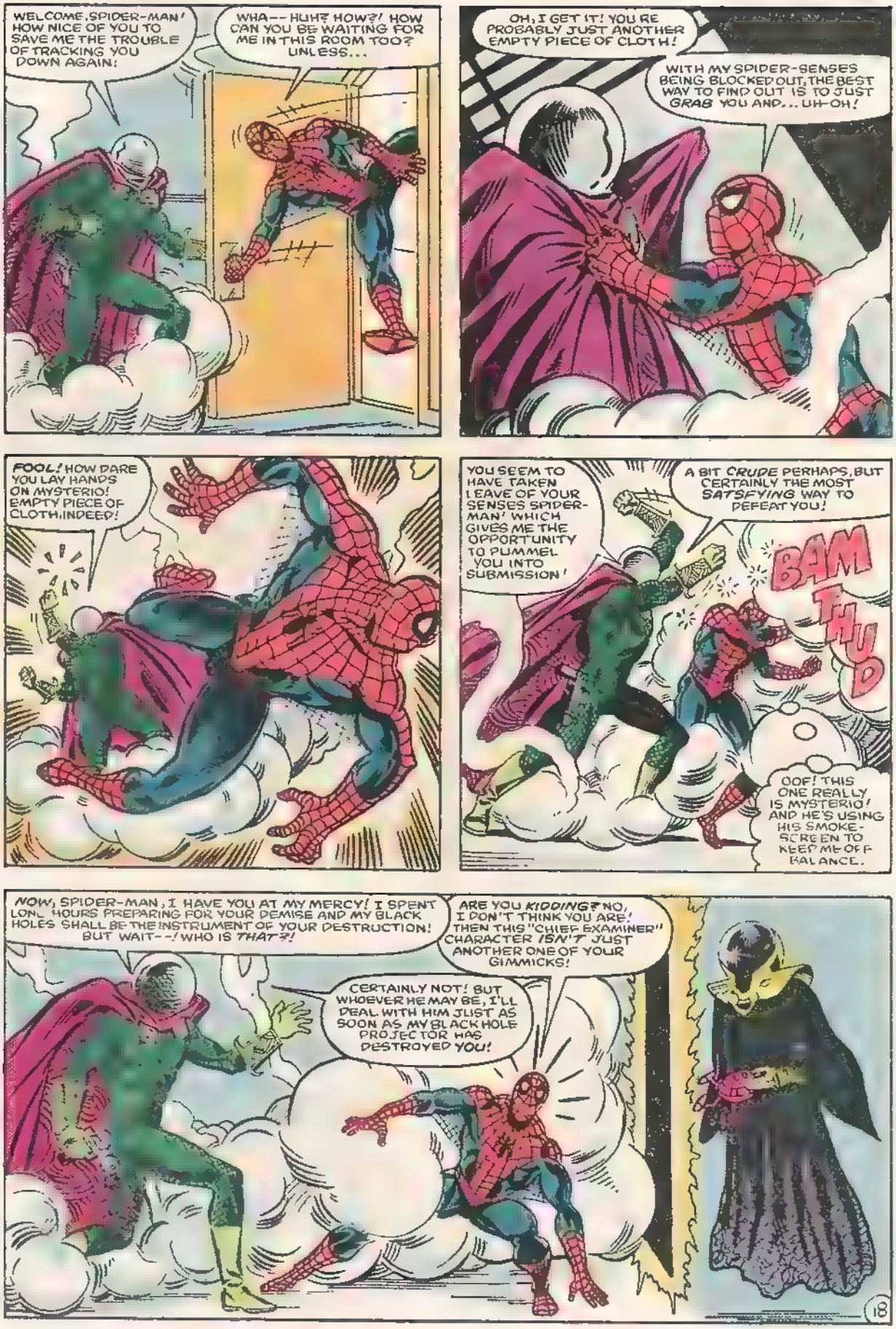

--THEN BE ONE!
ARRGGHH!! M-MY FACE--MY HANDS! THEY'RE CHANGING...GROWING!
AND THE PAIN--!

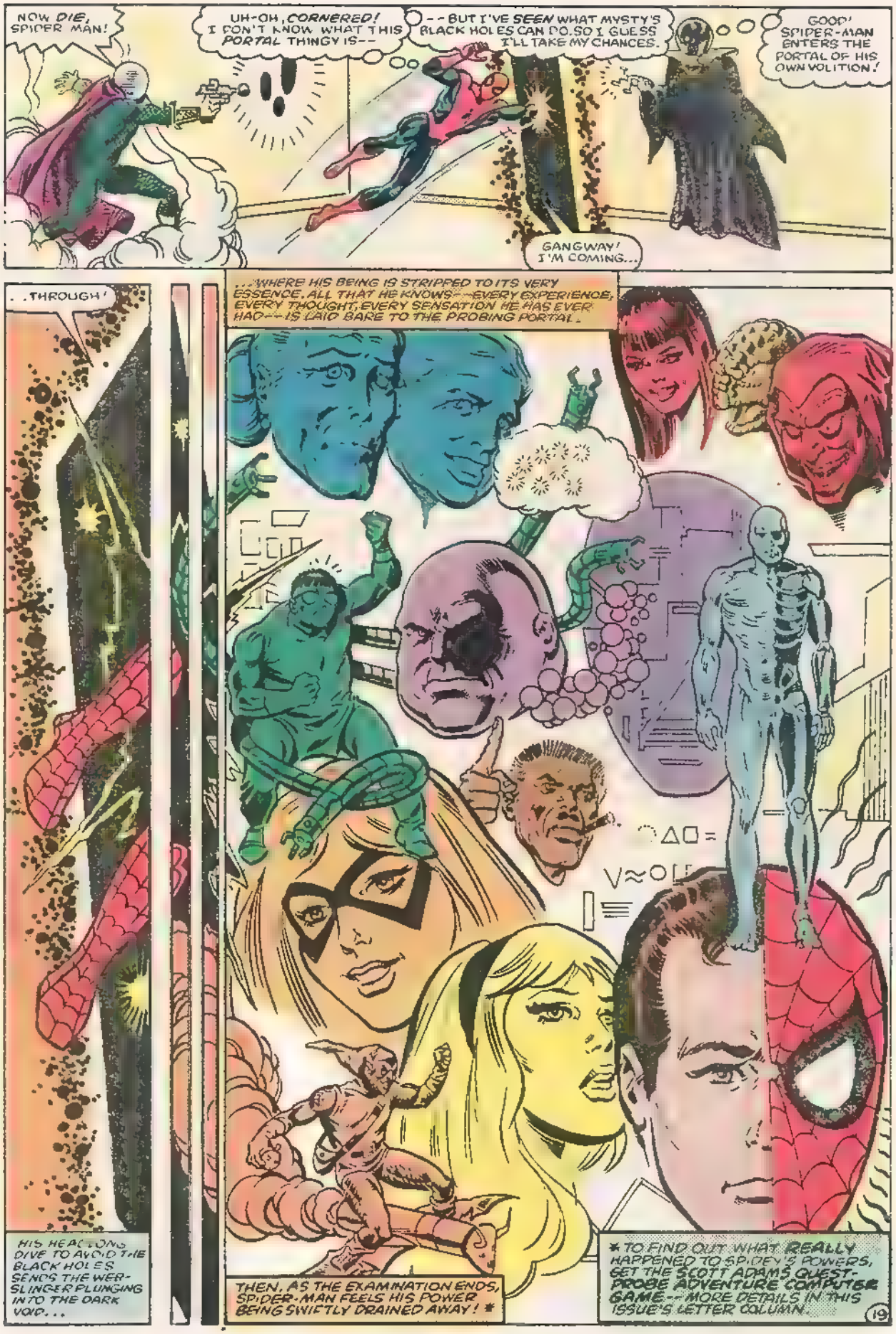

GOT TO GET AWAY--GET TIME TO THINK!
RUN WHILE YOU CAN! SOON YOU WILL BE MORE SPIDER THAN MAN, AND THEN WILL MYSTERIO HAVE HIS FINAL REVENGE!
THIS IS INSANE! MYSTERIO NEVER HAD THIS KIND OF POWER BEFORE. HOW COULD...?


OF COURSE! WHEN WE GRAPPLED HE MANAGED TO SLAP SOME MOVIE-TV SPECIAL EFFECTS APPLIANCES ON ME!
NOT ONLY DID THEY ALTER MY APPEARANCE, BUT HE HAD 'EM FITTED WITH NEEDLES THAT POKED INTO MY SKIN--CAUSING ME ENOUGH PAIN THAT I OVER-LOOKED THE OBVIOUS EXPLANATION AT FIRST!
I'LL SAY THIS FOR MYSTY--HIS HANDIWORK GETS BETTER ALL THE...

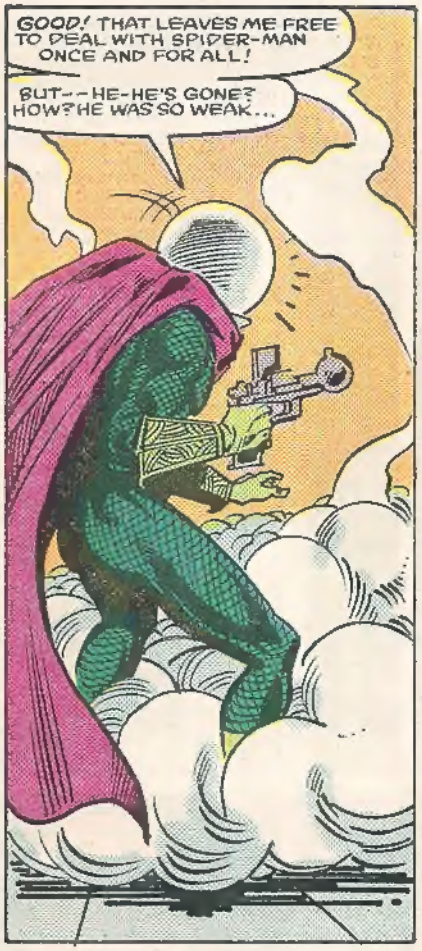

...TIME?! NOW WHAT?!
THIS MUST BE SOME NEW TRAP MYSTY'S SET UP FOR ME--BUT WHY?
I- I SEEM TO BE GETTING SOME SORT OF MENTAL PROJECTION FROM THAT GEM! IT'S BEING HELD CAPTIVE--BY THAT EGG?! IT WANTS ME TO FREE IT SOMEHOW!
BUT I SENSE IT'S EVIL... EVIL! I WON'T HELP IT! I WON'T!
THEN, AS SPIDER-MAN BREAKS FREE OF THE GEM'S INFLUENCE...
MY GOSH! MY SPIDEY-SENSE IS TINGLING! GOTTA MOVE IT! THAT EGG THINGY IS GOING TO--
--EXPLODE!
WHILE ON DURGAN'S PLANET...
BAH! THAT FLESHY LIFE-FORM CALLED SPIDER-MAN RESISTED THE MENTAL MANIPULATION OF THE HOLOGRAPHIC IMAGE I PROJECTED!
WHEN THE IMAGE MADE CONTACT WITH HIM HE INSTINCTIVELY RECOGNIZED THE THREAT WE POSE TO HIS TYPE OF BEING AND THUS LABELED US EVIL!
HE ALSO LABELS THE BEING CALLED "MYSTERIO" AS EVIL! PERHAPS I WOULD DO WELL TO TEST THIS MYSTERIO FOR MY PURPOSES!
WHILE BACK ON EARTH...
HUH? THAT'S ODD! THERE WAS A DOOZY OF AN EXPLOSION IN HERE, BUT NOTHING'S BEEN DAMAGED!
AND THERE'S NO SIGN OF THAT JEWEL, OR THE EGG, OR THE PEDESTALS THEY WERE RESTING ON!
WAS THIS ANOTHER ONE OF MYSTY'S ILLUSIONS--OR SOMETHING. .ELSE?

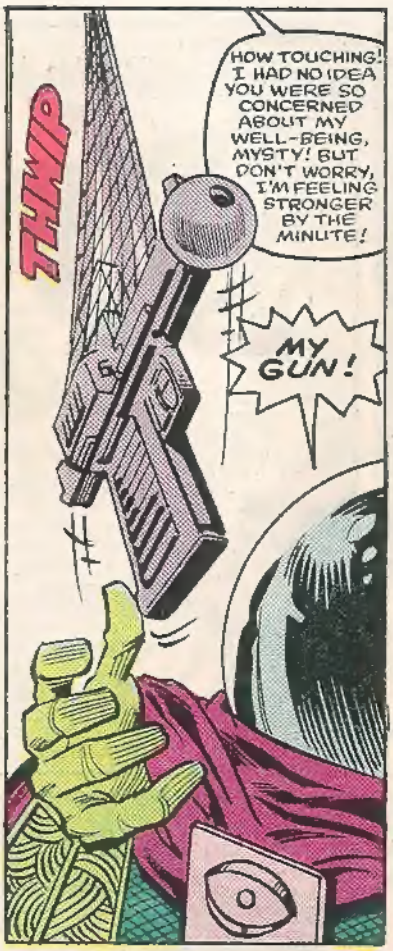

EH?!
WILL YOU PASS THROUGH MY PORTAL NOW, SPIDER-MAN?
NOT ON YOUR LIFE, BUBBY! AND SINCE YOU SEEM TO ENJOY SWITCHING THREADS SO MUCH--
--LET ME ADD A FEW NEW THREADS OF MY OWN TO YOUR WARDROBE!
THWIP
MAYBE IF I SHOOT BUT A LARGE GLOB OF WEBBING HE WON'T BE ABLE TO DISSOLVE IT ALL, AND--HEY!
MY WEB CAUGHT HIM SQUARELY--BUT IT JUST PUSHED HIS CLOAK ASIDE--AND THERE WAS NOTHING THERE!
PRETTY NEAT TRICK, MYSTY! IT'S A SHAME YOU LEFT THE MOTION PICTURE BIZ AND TURNED YOUR SPECIAL EFFECTS TALENTS TO CRIME!
I GUESS YOU CREATED THIS OUTFIT JUST TO KEEP ME GUESSING, HUH? BUT I'VE GOT NOTHING TO FEAR FROM AN EMPTY CAPE!
THEN, YOU WON'T BE ADVERSE TO STEPPING THROUGH MY PORTAL!
ER...THEN AGAIN MAYBE I'D BE BETTER OFF IF I SWUNG AWAY AND COLLECTED MY THOUGHTS FOR A BIT!
TA-TA, MYSTY, OR CHIEF EXAMINER, OR WHATEVER YOU'RE CALLING YOURSELF!
BOY, AM I GETTING TIRED OF GOING THROUGH DOORWAYS!
17


WELCOME, SPIDER-MAN! HOW NICE OF YOU TO SAVE ME THE TROUBLE OF TRACKING YOU DOWN AGAIN!
WHA-- HUH? HOW?! HOW CAN YOU BE WAITING FOR ME IN THIS ROOM TOO? UNLESS...
OH, I GET IT! YOU'RE PROBABLY JUST ANOTHER EMPTY PIECE OF CLOTH!
WITH MY SPIDER-SENSES BEING BLOCKED OUT, THE BEST WAY TO FIND OUT IS TO JUST GRAB YOU AND... UH-OH!
FOOL! HOW DARE YOU LAY HANDS ON MYSTERIO! EMPTY PIECE OF CLOTH, INDEED!
THUD
YOU SEEM TO HAVE TAKEN LEAVE OF YOUR SENSES SPIDER-MAN! WHICH GIVES ME THE OPPORTUNITY TO PUMMEL YOU INTO SUBMISSION!
A BIT CRUDE PERHAPS, BUT CERTAINLY THE MOST SATISFYING WAY TO DEFEAT YOU!
BAM
THUD
OOF! THIS ONE REALLY IS MYSTERIO! AND HE'S USING HIS SMOKE-SCREEN TO KEEP ME OFF BALANCE.
NOW, SPIDER-MAN, I HAVE YOU AT MY MERCY! I SPENT LONG HOURS PREPARING FOR YOUR DEMISE AND MY BLACK HOLES SHALL BE THE INSTRUMENT OF YOUR DESTRUCTION! BUT WAIT--! WHO IS THAT?!
ARE YOU KIDDING? NO, I DON'T THINK YOU ARE! THEN THIS "CHIEF EXAMINER" CHARACTER ISN'T JUST ANOTHER ONE OF YOUR GIMMICKS!
CERTAINLY NOT! BUT WHOEVER HE MAY BE, I'LL DEAL WITH HIM JUST AS SOON AS MY BLACK HOLE PROJECTOR HAS DESTROYED YOU!


NOW DIE, SPIDER MAN!
UH-OH, CORNERED! I DON'T KNOW WHAT THIS PORTAL THINGY IS--
--BUT I'VE SEEN WHAT MYSTY'S BLACK HOLES CAN DO. SO I GUESS I'LL TAKE MY CHANCES.
GOOD! SPIDER-MAN ENTERS THE PORTAL OF HIS OWN VOLITION!
GANGWAY! I'M COMING...
...THROUGH!
...WHERE HIS BEING IS STRIPPED TO ITS VERY ESSENCE. ALL THAT HE KNOWS--EVERY EXPERIENCE, EVERY THOUGHT, EVERY SENSATION HE HAS EVER HAD--IS LAID BARE TO THE PROBING PORTAL.
HIS HEADLONG DIVE TO AVOID THE BLACK HOLES SENDS THE WEB-SLINGER PLUNGING INTO THE DARK VOID...
THEN, AS THE EXAMINATION ENDS, SPIDER-MAN FEELS HIS POWER BEING SWIFTLY DRAINED AWAY! *
* TO FIND OUT WHAT REALLY HAPPENED TO SPIDEY'S POWERS, GET THE SCOTT ADAMS QUEST-PROBE ADVENTURE COMPUTER GAME--MORE DETAILS IN THIS ISSUE'S LETTER COLUMN.

EXCELLENT! THE SECRETS OF SPIDER-MAN'S POWERS ARE NOW ADDED TO THOSE OF THE HULK!* MY MISSION IS A SUCCESS!
*AS SHOWN LAST ISSUE--BOB.
EVEN AS THE CHIEF EXAMINER REVELS IN HIS TRIUMPH, SPIDER-MAN FINISHES HIS BRIEF JOURNEY THROUGH THE PORTAL...
UNNGH! I--I FEEL SO WEAK! LIKE I LEFT ALL MY ENERGY BEHIND ME IN THERE!
INDEED? THEN I SHALL DISPATCH YOU QUICKLY AND TURN MY ATTENTIONS TO THIS UPSTART IMPOSTER!
BUT JUST THEN, ON OURGAN'S PLANET...
THE CHIEF EXAMINER CONFRONTS THE ORGANIC FORM CALLED MYSTERIO!
THIS IS MY CHANCE TO HAVE AN "EVIL" BEING PASSED THROUGH THE PORTAL! I MUST TRY TO BEND THE EXAMINER TO MY WILL BY INFLUENCING THE COMPUTER--BUT SUBTLY, SO THE MATTER ENERGY-EGG DOES NOT REGISTER MY ACTIVITY!
I HAVE THE SECRET OF SPIDER-MAN'S POWER, BUT I--I NEED MORE! YOU MUST PASS THROUGH THE PORTAL, MYSTERIO!
NOW WHAT?!
NO! KEEP THAT THING AWAY FROM ME!
YOU'LL FIND THAT MYSTERIO IS NOT SO EASY TO CAPTURE!
WHEW!- WHAT A BREAK! I WAS A SITTING DUCK! GUESS THIS PROVES CHIEFY ISN'T ONE OF MYSTERIO'S EFFECTS!
NO! THE COMPUTER IS RESISTING--REASSERTING CONTROL! AND I DARE NOT INCREASE MY POWER OUTPUT FOR FEAR OF TRIGGERING THE EGG'S EXPLOSION!
WHAT'S THIS?! THE CHIEF EXAMINER AND HIS ACCURSED PORTAL ARE DISAPPEARING JUST AS I WAS ABOUT TO LAUNCH A COUNTER-ATTACK!
20

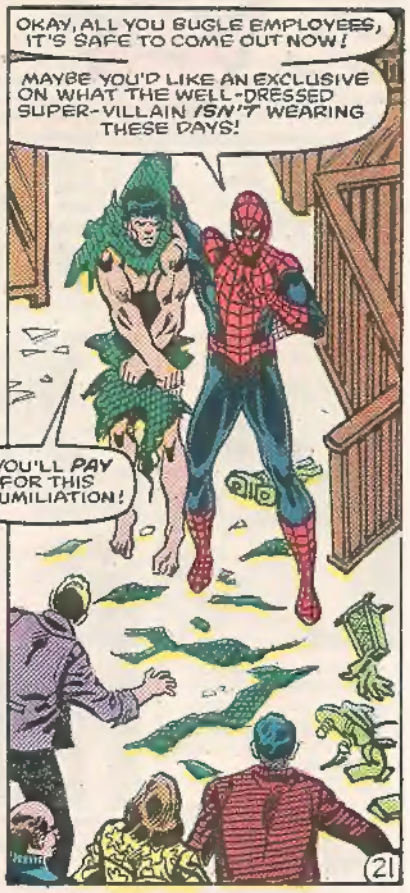

GOOD! THAT LEAVES ME FREE TO DEAL WITH SPIDER-MAN ONCE AND FOR ALL!
BUT--HE-HE'S GONE? HOW? HE WAS SO WEAK...

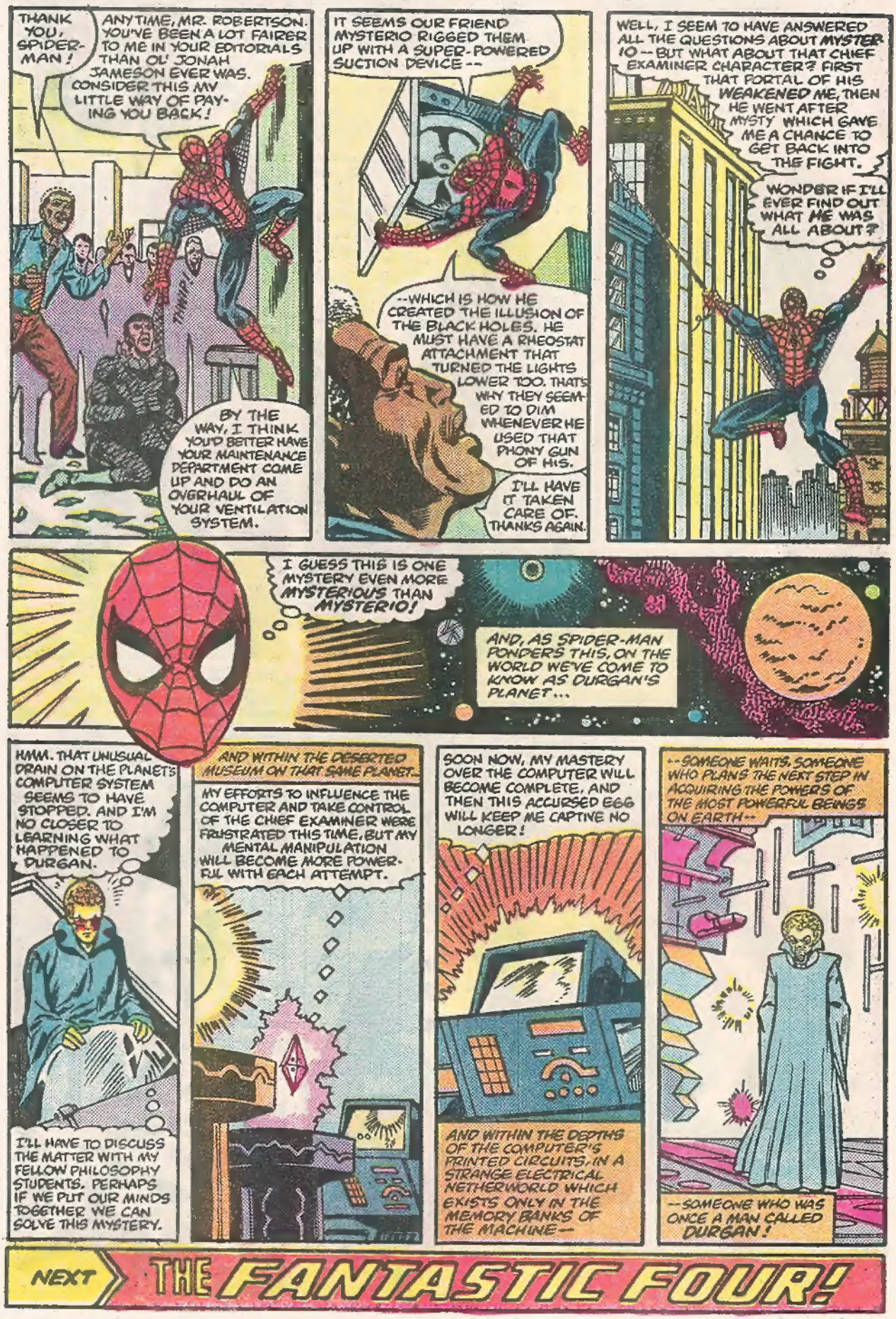

THWIP
HOW TOUCHING! I HAD NO IDEA YOU WERE SO CONCERNED ABOUT MY WELL-BEING, MYSTY! BUT DON'T WORRY, I'M FEELING STRONGER BY THE MINUTE!
MY GUN!

THAT MINI-CHASE YOU HAD WITH CHIEFY GAVE ME A BREATHER--
--NOW SUPPOSE I GIVE YOU A BREATHER BY LETTING SOME FRESH AIR INTO THAT STUFFY OLD HELMET OF YOURS!
CRASH!

IF ONLY I HAD SOMETHING TO FAN AWAY THOSE NASTY FUMES--AH, THIS CLOAK WILL DO NICELY!
CRUNCH!
KRINCH!
OOPS! SORRY! I SEEM TO HAVE BROKEN YOUR SPIDER-SENSE JAMMERS!
YOU REALLY MUST LEARN TO HIDE THEM SOMEWHERE OTHER THAN THOSE SILLY EYE MEDALLIONS!

MAY AS WELL RELIEVE YOU OF THE REST OF YOUR GIZMOS WHILE I'M AT IT!
RIP!
SHRED!
ACID-GLOVES, SPRINGY BOOTS... MY, MY--QUITE AN ARSENAL!


OKAY, ALL YOU BUGLE EMPLOYEES, IT'S SAFE TO COME OUT NOW!
MAYBE YOU'D LIKE AN EXCLUSIVE ON WHAT THE WELL-DRESSED SUPER-VILLAIN ISN'T WEARING THESE DAYS!
YOU'LL PAY FOR THIS HUMILIATION!


THANK YOU, SPIDER-MAN!
ANYTIME, MR. ROBERTSON. YOU'VE BEEN A LOT FAIRER TO ME IN YOUR EDITORIALS THAN OL' JONAH JAMESON EVER WAS. CONSIDER THIS MY LITTLE WAY OF PAYING YOU BACK!
BY THE WAY, I THINK YOU'D BETTER HAVE YOUR MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT COME UP AND DO AN OVERHAUL OF YOUR VENTILATION SYSTEM.
IT SEEMS OUR FRIEND MYSTERIO RIGGED THEM UP WITH A SUPER-POWERED SUCTION DEVICE--
--WHICH IS HOW HE CREATED THE ILLUSION OF THE BLACK HOLES. HE MUST HAVE A RHEOSTAT ATTACHMENT THAT TURNED THE LIGHTS LOWER TOO. THAT'S WHY THEY SEEMED TO DIM WHENEVER HE USED THAT PHONY GUN OF HIS.
I'LL HAVE IT TAKEN CARE OF. THANKS AGAIN.
WELL, I SEEM TO HAVE ANSWERED ALL THE QUESTIONS ABOUT MYSTERIO -- BUT WHAT ABOUT THAT CHIEF EXAMINER CHARACTER? FIRST THAT PORTAL OF HIS WEAKENED ME, THEN HE WENT AFTER MYSTY WHICH GAVE ME A CHANCE TO GET BACK INTO THE FIGHT.
WONDER IF I'LL EVER FIND OUT WHAT ME WAS ALL ABOUT?
I GUESS THIS IS ONE MYSTERY EVEN MORE MYSTERIOUS THAN MYSTERIO!
AND, AS SPIDER-MAN PONDERS THIS, ON THE WORLD WE'VE COME TO KNOW AS DURGAN'S PLANET...
HMM. THAT UNUSUAL DRAIN ON THE PLANET'S COMPUTER SYSTEM SEEMS TO HAVE STOPPED. AND I'M NO CLOSER TO LEARNING WHAT HAPPENED TO DURGAN.
I'LL HAVE TO DISCUSS THE MATTER WITH MY FELLOW PHILOSOPHY STUDENTS. PERHAPS IF WE PUT OUR MINDS TOGETHER WE CAN SOLVE THIS MYSTERY.
AND WITHIN THE DESERTED MUSEUM ON THAT SAME PLANET...
MY EFFORTS TO INFLUENCE THE COMPUTER AND TAKE CONTROL OF THE CHIEF EXAMINER WERE FRUSTRATED THIS TIME, BUT MY MENTAL MANIPULATION WILL BECOME MORE POWERFUL WITH EACH ATTEMPT.
SOON NOW, MY MASTERY OVER THE COMPUTER WILL BECOME COMPLETE, AND THEN THIS ACCURSED EGG WILL KEEP ME CAPTIVE NO LONGER!
AND WITHIN THE DEPTHS OF THE COMPUTER'S PRINTED CIRCUITS, IN A STRANGE ELECTRICAL NETHERWORLD WHICH EXISTS ONLY IN THE MEMORY BANKS OF THE MACHINE--
--SOMEONE WAITS, SOMEONE WHO PLANS THE NEXT STEP IN ACQUIRING THE POWERS OF THE MOST POWERFUL BEINGS ON EARTH--
--SOMEONE WHO WAS ONCE A MAN CALLED DURGAN!
NEXT
THE FANTASTIC FOUR!

QUESTPROBE QUESTIONS

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Letters may also be addressed to:
ASK SCOTT, 155 Sabal Palm Drive, Longwood, FL 32779
(If you don't wish for your address to be printed, please tell us.)

If you're just joining us, what you have before you is the second issue of the QUESTPROBE maxi-series, the brain child of Scott Adams and John Byrne. QUESTPROBE is unique in that it is part comic and part computer game. Each of the projected 12 issues of the comic will feature a different Marvel character. The ending of each story will lead into a QUESTPROBE Computer Game in which you, the reader, will play the part of the star of the comic, each comic having its own game. So, as you read this, there probably sits on a shelf in a computer store in your neighborhood the further QUESTPROBE adventures of Spider-Man, eagerly awaiting to be taken home by someone like you.

Scott Adams is one of the most widely recognized microcomputer programmers in the world. He is the founder of Adventureland International, producer of a popular line of adventure, arcade, business and utility software programs. John Byrne is currently the writer and artist on THE FANTASTIC FOUR and ALPHA FLIGHT in addition to the thousand and one other things he does around the Marvel Bullpen.

Scott will be answering your questions and receiving your accolades, regarding the QUESTPROBE series, in this and subsequent letters pages.

Without further ado we present our letters page . . .

Dear Scott,

I think that the QUESTPROBE maxi-series is an idea that is long overdue. Once again, Marvel is ahead of the pack with the perfect combination — a comic book series in conjunction with a computer game. I wish you much success, even though I know you don't need it.

Could you please provide more information regarding the purchase of this spectacular new computer game? And please let me know which computers it can be played on.

Charles Stanco
Glen Cove, NY

Thank you for your kind words, Charles. You are not the only reader who has requested more information regarding the purchase of the QUESTPROBE Computer Game.

So, for all of you interested readers, here we go . . .

After the printing of QUESTPROBE FEATURING THE HULK, Commodore Computers International will be producing the following formats:

Commodore 64 Disk, Commodore 4/plus Disk, Apple II Disk, IBM PC Disk, IBM PC Jr. Disk, Atari Home Computers Disk.

These formats should be available from any outlet that sells Commodore products. If you can't find them, you can order directly from Scott Adams, Inc., Box 3435, 155 Sabal Palm Drive, Longwood, FL 32750.

Yours truly will still be writing and programming the Adventures, but those formats will be marketed and produced by Commodore! They will be priced tentatively at $29.95, but this may change when they hit the market. Also Scott Adams, Inc. will be selling the following formats directly: Atari 32k tape, Commodore 64 tape (with full graphics!), Color Computer tape 16k, TRS-80 Model 1, 3, 4 disk. Sorry to say, currently there are no plans for Colecovision, TI or Spectravideo. Macintosh owners standby — we will probably have a format out before the end of the year!

To the Wonderful, Terrific, and Great Scott Adams,

QUESTPROBE #1 was simply mind-boggling. But there was no way it could go wrong with a creative team consisting of Scott Adams, John Byrne, Bill Mantlo, Mark Gruenwald and John Romita. Keep up the good work.

I am aware that the Hulk, Doctor Strange and Spider-Man are slated for future QUESTPROBE books. Who else among Marvel's mightiest will appear in these illustrious pages?

Jessie Roland
Alexandria, LA

Great Scott? Jessie, you're not related to my mother, are you?

But seriously, Marvel and I have presently scheduled the Fantastic Four to appear in QUESTPROBE #3. Beyond that we're not sure, but we would love to hear from you, the readers. Write in and tell us which of Marvel's greatest you would most like to see adorning these questing pages (or meandering across your video-screen) and we'll see what we can do. Okay?

Dear Marvel,

Computers and Comics! What a perfect combination. And of course it is presented to us by Scott Adams and Marvel Comics. Keep them coming.

Will the QUESTPROBE games be graphics, text or both? And how many players will be able to participate in each game?

Jon Holt
Little Rock, AR

Jon, the QUESTPROBE adventures will be both text (on most tape versions) and graphic (on most disk versions).

Adventures usually allow one player at a time, or as many friends who care to sit around the screen and kibbitz. I'm hoping that QUESTPROBE #3, for some disk formats, will allow the player to control all of the members of the Fantastic Four. I think that will be another first in the field of high-resolution computer adventure games. Also, starting with QUESTPROBE #2, there will be full sentence input. Two word sentences were fine for the Hulk, but we all know that Spider-Man is a bit more verbose.

Dear Marvel,

I've been fooling around with computers and comics for quite some time. And I'm very glad to see the two hobbies merge.

The QUESTPROBE software has yet to show up in my area, but since the store I work for carries Mr. Adams' other Adventure Games I'm sure it will be just a matter of time before I get to try it out on my Commodore 64.

As far as the comic book goes, it was great to see John Romita's work in the pages of QUESTPROBE. Bill Mantlo and Mark Gruenwald certainly contributed their utmost to make this book a success. All in all the first outing of QUESTPROBE proved to be an excellent one. I hope to see more of the same.

Stephen Smith
Barboursville, WV 25504

Thanks, Stephen. We are certainly going to try to give loyal QUESTPROBE readers our best in future issues. Only you — along with the Chief Examiner, of course — can be the final judge of our efforts.

Dear Staff,

QUESTPROBE #1 was very well written and illustrated. I found it to be a very enlightening story about the Hulk. The story showed the heroic side of the Hulk that is usually overlooked. I'm glad that you began your series with him.

One question before I sign off. Why did the natter energy-egg and the bio-gem explode?

Albert Garvey
Staten Island, NY

Albert, we know that if you are reading this letter column you already know something about why the natter energy-egg exploded. And you can bet that there's more to the story than what we've shown so far, a subject which will be explored further in future issues of QUESTPROBE.

Thank you all for the wonderful letters and cards. I answered all the ones personally that remembered to send in an SASE (Self-Addressed Stamped Envelope) and I hope to hear from you all again real soon! P.S.: If you like QUESTPROBE Adventure Games *please* don't pirate them or give them away, but help out and buy your own copy, OK?

So, what's next, you ask? Next is . . .

further developments on the approach of the Black Fleet . . .

more on the mystery of the Bio-Gem . . .

additional info about the motives of the Chief Examiner . . .

new findings by the young philosopher, Tuskar . . .

and . . . startling revelations on the fate of Durgan!

Whew!! All this . . . and the Fantastic Four too!!! What more could you want? What else would we have room for? See you in 90 days (or thereabouts).